

Iran air chief, aides killed in crash

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran's air force chief, his deputy and four other senior officers were among 12 people killed when their plane crashed in central Iran, officials said Friday. General Mansour Sattari, his deputy Gen. Mosafa Ardestani, and four other officers were killed along with six crewmen when their plane crashed late Thursday trying to return to Isfahan airport following "technical difficulties," they said. The plane had taken off for the capital Tehran, they added. Gen. Mansour Sattari, who was 46 and had trained in both Iran and the United States, was considered the architect of the reconstruction and modernisation of the air force which was badly damaged in the 1980-1988 war with Iraq.

Jordan Times

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جورдан تايمز يومية مستقلة نشرها مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية - الرأي

U.S. opposes French section in Iraq

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States on Friday sharply criticised France's decision to reestablish a diplomatic foothold in Baghdad by opening an interest section at the Romanian embassy there. "We do not believe that this is a timely action. We don't consider the particular decision to be helpful or constructive," State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly said. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe announced the move after a meeting in Paris on Friday with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz (see page 12). "We do not believe that this is an appropriate time to make gestures toward Iraq," Ms. Shelly told a news briefing. "Iraq continues to defy the international community and to violate many U.N. Security Council resolutions." Ms. Shelly said a U.N. commission charged with dismantling Iraq's programmes for building weapons of mass destruction reported in December that Baghdad was failing to cooperate. "We believe that such behaviour should not be rewarded. They (the French) did not specifically solicit our advice on this point, but that's our reaction to it," she said.

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Sharif Zeid in consultations, expected to finalise cabinet soon

Majali government remains as caretaker after resigning

New cabinet expected to have wider parliamentary base

By Ghadeer Taher and Ayman Al Safadi

AMMAN — Prime Minister-designate Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker continued consultations late Friday evening over the formation of his new government which is expected to be announced either Saturday or Sunday.

The government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali formally submitted its resignation on Thursday to His Majesty King Hussein, who asked the cabinet to remain in office in a caretaker capacity until a new executive authority is formed.

Although it was not officially announced, the King also asked Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to form the new government, sources said.

Sharif Zeid consulted over the past two days with parliamentary blocs, technocrats, and independent politicians to form his cabinet which is expected to include 10-15 lawmakers.

Sources close to Sharif Zeid said he would consult with all the blocs in the Lower House of Parliament before he announces his government. Many parliamentarians agreed and said it was characteristic of Sharif Zeid's politics to consult with the legislature and maintain a good working relationship.

Mr. Abu Jamous said the

Crown Prince begins private visit to U.K.

Trip unrelated to cabinet change

By Jennifer Hamann

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's departure to London Thursday was neither a political move nor a personal message related to the impending change in the government, a source close to the Crown Prince said Friday.

The source dismissed comments by some observers that the Crown Prince's decision to travel was a demonstration of his preference not to participate in the deliberations in selecting the next Cabinet.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday offered his resignation to His Majesty King Hussein, and Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker has been asked to form a new government.

Many observers believe that Prince Hassan was instrumental in forming the last Council of Ministers, particularly in the addition of parliamentarians, among them, Thounan Hindawi, to the cabinet. Mr. Hindawi resigned his cabinet seat on Dec.

5, 1994 over differences in policies in the post-peace era, but other members of parliament have continued to serve in the cabinet until this day.

According to the source, the reshuffle of Dr. Majali's cabinet last June was participated in by the Crown Prince because, at the time, the situation was "unique." The country was moving swiftly towards the signing of a peace treaty with Israel, and the Crown Prince had been actively involved in talks with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and thus it was apt at the time that Prince Hassan contribute to the ministerial selection process, said the source.

In the current process, the sources added, "the situation is different."

According to the source, the Crown Prince and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarwat had planned their trip to London more than three months ago with the purpose of accompanying their son Prince Rashed back to the second school term at Harrow in England.



Abdul Salam Majali

Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker

bloc was still awaiting consultations with the prime minister-designate.

Although Sharif Zeid has not completed consultations with all parliamentary blocs, representatives of most of the blocs were confident that the new government would enjoy a strong parliamentary base when it seeks the House's vote of confidence.

"Sharif Zeid is a democratic man who respects the House and its institutions," said independent deputy Awad Khleifat, who could be among a 17-member group that some centrist deputies are trying to form.

Sharif Zeid's approach,

said other lawmakers, would result in a smooth executive-legislative relationship.

But some political observers said that the new cabinet would not include as many new faces as earlier expected, giving rise to speculations that the new cabinet would not be able to bring about enough changes to meet the responsibilities of the peace era.

Others, however, expect to see a new cabinet with a strong and a wider parliamentary base.

"The new government will be more representative of political trends in the country," said a deputy who is

expected to be on Sharif Zeid's team.

His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly said that the era of peace will require a new spirit to face challenges posed by signing of the Jordan-Israel peace deal.

In addition to the 10-to-15 deputies who are expected to be on Sharif Zeid's team, five to seven ministers from the outgoing government are expected to join the new cabinet.

The deputies expected to be in the government are: Abdul Hadi Al Majali, Abdul Karim Kabariti, Ali Al Ragheb, Saleh Israeidi (minister of water and irrigation in the outgoing cabinet), Sameer Habashieh, Awad Khleifat, Aref Bataneh (minister of health), Rateb Al Soud (minister of higher education), Sameer Kawar (minister of transport), Munir Souber, Abdul Karim Al Dughami, Jamal Sanaiyah and Tawfiq Kreishan (minister of rural and municipal affairs and the environment).

Ministers in Dr. Majali's government who are expected to join the new cabinet in addition to the deputies-ministers mentioned above are: Reema Khalaf, Adel Al Quda and Abdul Razzaq Ensour.

(Continued on page 7)

House confident of role in making government

By Ayman Al Safadi

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The continuation of consultations with members of the Lower House of Parliament over the composition of the new government has held up the formation of the cabinet for the past two days as representatives of the five blocs and independent deputies in the House asserted that negotiations will end in a satisfactory manner to both sides.

Parliamentarians Friday appeared confident that the prime minister-designate, Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, who they said respects the House and its institutions, will not form his government before consulting with all the blocs that form the 80-member House.

By doing this, observers say, Sharif Zeid will not only be pursuing a democratic way of forming a government but will also ensure the widest parliamentary base for his government which is expected to win a stronger vote of confidence than that of Dr. Abdul Salam Majali's cabinet.

Though Sharif Zeid had not contacted all parliamentary groups by yesterday evening, parliamentarians were expecting this to happen before the new cabinet is announced Saturday or Sunday.

The largest and most coherent bloc that Sharif Zeid will have to deal with is the 17-member Islamic Action Front (IAF), which has sent many signs that it is willing to reach a good working relationship with the prime minister.

Though the Islamists are not expected to join the new government as a group, sources said the IAF will be consulted on its formation.

In what was seen as a signal that the Islamists are willing to join the government in an effort to break away from their isolation in the House and the political arena in general, IAF sources said the absolute veto against joining the executive authority was no longer in effect and their participation will depend on the choice of the ministerial team and the programme of the new cabinet.

The last time the Islamists

joined the government was in 1991 when then Prime Minister Mudar Badran agreed with them on a 14-point programme that sought to meet many of their demands.

The Islamists have been out of the government since June 1991 and their relations with the executive authority reached its lowest level after Dr. Majali formed his government in May last year. However, the reduced weight of the Islamists in the House and probably on the street is sure to deny them the strong bargaining power they had in 1989 when they had 23 parliamentary seats and about 10 supporters.

In the current House, the IAF has only 17 seats and less than five supporters and their relations with other political groups and parliamentary blocs suffered a blow when some Islamists boycotted the speech from the Throne with which His Majesty King Hussein opened the 12th Parliament in October.

But signs that the Islamists

(Continued on page 7)

'Jordan is a state of institutions, governments reflect continuity'

By Sa'd Shwai

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The outgoing government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali has left behind a legacy of \$5.352 million in foreign debt, down from the nearly \$7 billion it inherited. The new government of Prime-designate Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker will have to work hard to ensure the rescheduling or writing off of a great part of Jordan's foreign debt.

General indicators say that the strongest candidate to fill the finance portfolio in Sharif Zeid's cabinet is Basel Jardaneh, a veteran finance minister who has played a major role in rescheduling Jordan's debts to the London

and Paris clubs before outgoing Finance Minister Sami Qammoh took over 18 months ago. Mr. Qammoh says it is not important who occupies the finance portfolio since, Jordan is a state of institutions with clear-cut economic policies.

In a statement to Al Rai and the Jordan Times Mr. Qammoh said: "We are all in one trench. It is the trench of the homeland."

The policy followed is continuous and based on handing responsibility from one generation to the other to ensure Jordan's march and achieve its ambitions and aspirations," he said.

The Majali government achieved the most significant

political achievement in more than 20 years by concluding the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, he said.

The Majali government, helped by political and other circumstances, was also able to ensure the write-off of \$831 million of Jordan's foreign debts — \$702 million owed to the United States, \$74 million to Britain and the remaining amount to France and Germany.

Dr. Majali's government

has also rescheduled \$2.2 billion of foreign debts whose maturity dates fall in 1995, 1996 and mid-97, according to Mr. Qammoh.

This, he said, pushes the

Jordanian economy forward,

saves resources for local investments and enhances Jor-

dan's foreign currency reserves.

Answering a question on the volume of loans bor-

rowed by Dr. Majali's govern-

ment and the volume of

repayments, Mr. Qammoh

said the government had bor-

wowed \$470 million to sup-

port the balance of payments and the Kingdom's foreign currency reserve, while it repaid \$370 million.

Mr. Qammoh called for an intensification of efforts of the private and public sectors and further liberalisation of the national economy.

The portfolio of foreign

affairs and the economic team — the ministries of planning, industry and trade and finance — are seen as the most important in the government. As such, eyes were focused on possible nominees to fill these posts.

Three names were heard Friday as possible contenders to assuming the foreign affairs portfolio. They were Marwan Al Qassem, who now serves as King Hussein's political advisor, Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti, head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament, and Fayed Tarawneh, Jordan's ambassador to Washington. The names of Dr. Kamal Shaer and Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber, both serving members of the Upper House of Parliament, were also mentioned as possible candidates for the job.

As far as the foreign affairs portfolio was concerned, spe-

culation was that if the King

decides to retain Mr. Qassem, who served as foreign minister in several cabinets, as chief of Royal Court, a post Mr. Qassem filled in the late 1980s, then Mr. Kabariti would have the job of foreign minister.

Mr. Kabariti, who is a two-term member of Parliament from Aqaba and a three-time minister in different cabinets, was asked to become foreign minister in the government of Abdul Salam Majali in the third reshuffle Dr. Majali carried out in June 1994 in 1993 when Mohammad Adwan was appointed tourism minister to replace Yanal Hikmat who was moved to the Royal Court, and the second in January 1994. But Mr. Kabariti declined the offer.

But he has since assumed the chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the

(Continued on page 7)

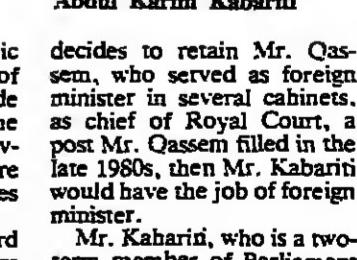


Sami Qammoh

Basel Jardaneh



Marwan Al Qassem



Abdul Karim Kabariti

Washington meeting to discuss Mideast bank

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Experts from 37 countries and international organisations will meet in Washington on Jan. 10-11 to discuss setting up a Middle East development bank, the State Department announced on Thursday.

The meeting follows the Casablanca Middle East/North Africa economic summit two months ago which called for a study of funding mechanisms including a regional development bank to back up the Middle East peace process.

Israel, the Palestinians and a number of Arab states are taking part in the talks. But Syria and Lebanon, which have yet to reach a peace agreements with the Jewish state, have stayed away. The United States, the European Union and Japan are also involved.

U.S. officials say the proposed bank could be modelled on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, set up to aid post-communist Eastern Europe, but they hope it could be set up more rapidly.

Next week's meeting will be the first in a series leading up to a second economic summit in Amman later this year, where conclusions will be announced.

The State Department said the aim is to finance regional infrastructure projects, promote the private sector

and regional economic policy reform and dialogue.

State Department acting spokesperson Christine Shelly said: "This meeting constitutes a key element of the follow-up to the Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit held in Casablanca, Morocco, in October 1994, which called for a group of experts to examine different funding mechanisms to support the peace process, including the creation of a Middle East Bank for Economic Cooperation and Development. Attending the meeting will be 37 regional and extra-regional parties participating in and supporting the Middle East peace process."

The Casablanca declaration called for a group of experts to examine different funding mechanisms to support the peace process, including the creation of a Middle East Development Bank. The Jan. 10-11 meeting is the first gathering of this group of experts.

Proposals for the creation of a Middle East development bank originate with the core regional participants in the peace process. The Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles signed in September 1993 called for the creation of such a bank. Jordan and Egypt joined this call in meetings of the four parties in Cairo in late 1994. In October, President Bill Clinton told the Jordanian Parlia-

ment that the U.S. would take the lead in organising interested countries to consider creation of a properly structured regional development bank.

The meeting will consider financing mechanisms for economic development and the creation of new institutions to address key regional needs which are not adequately addressed through existing efforts. These include: the development of regional infrastructure, promotion of the private sector, and enhanced regional economic policy reform and dialogue. Regional development banks exist in other areas and have proved to be effective channels to leverage significant assistance from private and public sources.

Any new institutions would be designed to meet the region's unique economic and political needs and would complement, not duplicate, the work of existing institutions. The basic objective would be to add an effective economic pillar of support for the historic achievements in the peace process since Madrid.

The meeting will be the first in a series of meetings to examine these issues in detail, leading to the second Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit in Amman, later this year, where key conclusions would be announced.

Middle East parties remain committed to peace — U.S.

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Acting State Department spokesperson Christine Shelly said Thursday that despite recent outbreaks of violence in the West Bank and Gaza, the United States believes that Israel and the Palestinians remain strongly committed to the success of the peace process.

Asked about a recent series of shoot-outs between Israeli and Palestinian security forces, Ms. Shelly noted that five U.S. condemn all violence in the region but does not comment about specific incidents.

"We certainly are aware of the fact that it represents some frustrations on the ground," Ms. Shelly said. "But we feel that there's a very strong commitment to the success of the peace process. We continue to have contact with the parties in this regard."

We recognise, and certainly the parties (do), that this process was never going to be an easy one, but even in the face of the incidents which do continue and obviously can have an adverse effect on the environment, we still feel that the parties involved are committed to implementing the agreements that they have reached and that's what the process is about."

Against the backdrop of incidents like these, it is very important to do whatever can be done to improve the atmosphere and show the positive benefits associated with the changing situation, she said, "but we know it's going to be a long process, a difficult process."

Perry trip

Defence Secretary William Perry will discuss the Golan Heights in general terms when he visits the Middle East but otherwise intends to

avoid the issue, a senior defence official has said.

Mr. Perry arrives in Cairo Saturday for two days of talks before continuing on Sunday to Israel, where the peace process has been marred by turmoil in the West Bank and rising tensions between Israelis and Palestinians in Gaza.

"We do not intend to get involved in the peace process," said the defence official who spoke privately.

But Mr. Perry's itinerary includes a visit to the Golan Heights, the main sticking point in peace talks between Israel and Syria.

The defence official said Mr. Perry's discussions with the Israelis on the Golan Heights and the possible deployment of U.S. troops would be "in general terms, but will not be particular discussions."

"The peace process has not reached the stage where there has been a specific request or indeed where Syria and Israel has agreed on this. It would be premature to get into any detail," the official said.

Mr. Perry said following a speech at the National Press Club on Thursday that he looked forward to visiting Pakistan and India and holding talks to improve bilateral military ties with those two potential nuclear antagonists.

He will be the first U.S. defence secretary to visit South Asia since former Secretary Frank Carlucci in 1987.

Further clouding the issue of U.S. troops in the Golan is whether the Republi-

catocontrolled Congress will move — as Republican lead-

ers have threatened — to bloc U.S. participation in future peacekeeping missions.

The Perry trip comes amid published reports that Israel and China collaborated on developing and producing a new Chinese fighter, the F10, that was based on the Lavi, a joint Israeli-U.S. fighter jet project that was abandoned in 1987.

State Department spokesman Michael McCurry confirmed that the United States was investigating possible technology-transfers to China by Israel.

"Those types of reports concern us very deeply," he said, adding that Lynn Davis, undersecretary of state for international security affairs, had held "substantive discussions with the government of Israel on a range of these types of stories."

The suspected technology transfers could be raised in talks with the Israelis but would not be a priority, Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. Perry will be the first U.S. defence secretary to visit the Middle East since 1991. He is expected to travel to Pakistan and India after leaving Israel.

"Will we discuss in principle what some of the possibilities are? Yes," said the defence official.

Syria is demanding a total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan while Israel has offered a phased, partial withdrawal ahead of final negotiations on a peace with open borders and full diplomatic recognition.

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ers have threatened — to bloc U.S

Jordan first to sign U.N. rapid deployment agreement

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Adnan Abu Odeh and United Nations Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Forces Affairs Kofi Annan Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding on Jordan's participation in the U.N. Rapid Deployment Force (RDF).

Under the memorandum, Jordan agrees to provide the U.N. within 10 days with its requirements of resources, including human resources to be used for the U.N.'s peacekeeping operations worldwide.

Jordan is the first country to sign such a memorandum with the U.N.

Landing the Kingdom's initiative, Jordanian Secretary General Boutros Ghali, said Jordan is the only member state who has signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.N. to participate in the RDF.

The idea of establishing a U.N. RDF has been contained in the agenda for peace proposed in 1992 by Dr. Ghali. To translate this idea into action, the U.N. General Secretariat called in

April 1993 for a meeting of the member states concerned to exchange views on the subject.

In September 1993 a U.N. delegation met in Amman with various Jordanian officials from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Transportation, Health, Communications, Finance, as well as the Armed Forces and the Public Security Department.

Later in September, a Royal Decree was issued endorsing Jordan's participation in the U.N. Rapid Deployment Forces, and the Kingdom and the U.N. worked out details of Jordan's participation.

The memorandum can be amended any time provided that both parties agree to such amendment.

It can also be cancelled provided that a three-month notice to this effect is given by any of the signatory parties.

The Jordanian Armed Forces headquarters will serve as the focal point responsible for mobilisation, coordination and preparation of the force, according to the memorandum's provisions.



**Farid Saad
laid to rest**

AMMAN (J.T.) — Farid Ali Al Saad, a former minister and prominent businessman who passed away Thursday at the age of 57, was laid to rest at Um Al Hirsh Cemetery near Amman Friday.

His Majesty King Hussein delegated Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid to attend the funeral of Mr. Saad and offer condolences to his family.

Born in the Palestinian town of Um Al Fahn, Mr. Saad studied at Al Najah School in Nablus before obtaining his bachelors degree in science from the American University of Beirut (AUB).

He worked until 1935 as a science teacher and school principal. In 1935, he became a district officer in the Palestine government till 1943 when he became manager of the Arab Bank in Haifa.

A strong advocate of the Palestinian cause, Mr. Saad was a member of the War Economic Advisory Council of Palestine government from 1943-1946.

Mr. Saad served twice as minister of finance, and in those two tenures donated his government salary to the University of Jordan's Needy Students Fund.

He was also chairman and managing director of the Jordan Tobacco and Cigarettes Company in Amman for more than 50 years, vice chairman of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company until recently, chairman of the Bata Company until recently, chairman of the National Grindlays Bank Ltd, and a member of the Senate from 1951-1955 and 1984-1988.

The deceased was also founder and member of the Arab Orphans Committee in Haifa in 1940 which moved its offices in Amman and now runs a hotel management school in Jerusalem.

In addition, Mr. Saad was the first president of the Rotary Club in Amman, a trustee of the University of Jordan, trustee emeritus of the AUB, a member of the Institute for Palestine Studies-Beyrouth, chairman of the Jordan Printing and Packaging Company and member of the Geneva-based Welfare Association.

"The saker falcon is targeted by many hunters who want to sell this animal or train it for hunting purposes," Mr. Shahin explained.

The bird does not breed in the Middle East, but migrates here in the autumn and spring and spends its winters in North America, Mr. Shahin said.

"Hunting or trading this bird is illegal because it is an endangered species," Mr. Shahin said, adding that in Europe the saker falcon population has decreased by 80 per cent because of destruction to its habitat.

The RSCN was established in 1966 with the aim of preserving all the elements of nature including wild life. Seven reserves have been established, and five more will be completed by the end of the century.

One of the main objects of the society is to create public awareness of the importance of preserving nature and its resources specifically amongst students.

The seven existing wild reserves are Shomari, Azraq, Zouba, Wadi Mnejeb, Wadi Rum, Dana and the Aqaba marine reserve.

Experts seek new habitat for Arabian oryx herd

By Rama Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With the reintroduction of the Arabian oryx in Jordan, and the success of breeding, foreign and Arab experts are now faced with finding additional habitats for the large straight-horned antelope.

Following a workshop on protecting the Arabian oryx, which concluded on Thursday, Chris Johnson, director of conservation at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), said, "finding a place for the oryx to live is the greatest problem because it requires a very specialised habitat and large open spaces."

Mr. Johnson explained that the Kingdom's "Shomari Wildlife Reserve started with the re-introduction of eight oryx; now the number has jumped to 150 heads and we've got all the oryx in one place. It is possible that a disease could spread and kill them all."

Another problem, according to Mr. Johnson, is that this oryx population was bred from a small number. "There could be a problem with inbreeding, and this means you tend to get weaker animals in the herd," Mr. Johnson explained.

Speakers to the workshop also discussed ways to stop the oryx from being killed or captured by hunters, and how to keep them healthy.

The workshop ended with suggestions for study and implementation by the RSCN.

The four international and five local experts who attended the workshop first suggested locating a new habitat for the oryx. "We are going to invite specialists in species survival to assess which site would be best for the oryx," Mr. Johnson said.

Secondly, it is important to negotiate with the local residents of whatever area is decided upon and encourage them to become involved in the entire process of reintroduction so that they become the guardians of the new herd, the workshop participants agreed.

They also decided that the

herd must be split. "We need to create another small herd and put it in another place." The herd's movement and health must be monitored to ensure they are not hunted and that they are breeding successfully.

Issa Shahin of the RSCN said that the society will study the suggestions and recommendations and will ask the government to help by offering it a new location for the herd.

After the conclusion of the three-day workshop, the participants held a small "born-free" ceremony by releasing a two-year old saker falcon which was confiscated from a trader who was trying to sell the bird illegally.

"We released this bird to the wild so that it can live and breed and help increase its population," Mr. Shahin told the Jordan Times.

The saker falcon is targeted by many hunters who want to sell this animal or train it for hunting purposes," Mr. Shahin explained.

The bird does not breed in the Middle East, but migrates here in the autumn and spring and spends its winters in North America, Mr. Shahin said.

"Hunting or trading this bird is illegal because it is an endangered species," Mr. Shahin said, adding that in Europe the saker falcon population has decreased by 80 per cent because of destruction to its habitat.

The RSCN was established in 1966 with the aim of preserving all the elements of nature including wild life. Seven reserves have been established, and five more will be completed by the end of the century.

One of the main objects of the society is to create public awareness of the importance of preserving nature and its resources specifically amongst students.

The seven existing wild reserves are Shomari, Azraq, Zouba, Wadi Mnejeb, Wadi Rum, Dana and the Aqaba marine reserve.

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Amman intends to host follow-up economic meeting

Officials seek to take advantage of Casablanca momentum

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is proceeding with plans to host a follow-up meeting to last year's Casablanca summit on economic development of the Middle East and North Africa, and no decision has been taken yet to defer the conference by several months, according to officials.

Nabil Ammari, director-general of the Ministry of Planning, was quoted as saying in comments in the local press that a company entrusted with the organisational details of the conference had recommended that it be held in mid-September instead of June as originally scheduled.

But the government has not taken a final decision on the suggestion, Mr. Ammari told Al Aswaq newspaper. As such, for all practical purposes, the conference would take place in June unless a decision to the contrary is taken.

Senior officials closely involved in preparations for the meeting said it was unlikely that Jordan would decide to postpone the conference, given that the Kingdom would like to take advantage of the momentum created by the Casablanca meeting.

Mr. Ammari was quoted as saying that the Canadian government had undertaken to finance the studies on the various projects and a three-member Canadian team started work in this regard in December.

In the meantime, the various ministries are also involved in trying to reflect allocations in the fiscal budget for specific projects and make them compatible with the projects and proposals expected to be presented at the Amman conference.

Mr. Ammari said a steering committee would be formed soon to take charge

The Casablanca meeting served as a forum for Jordan to present projects, some of them in coordination with Israel and others related to the Kingdom's infrastructure and development. The projects, worth over \$18 billion in total, involved all sectors of the country's life, including health, education, energy, transport, water, tourism and communications.

After the Casablanca conference was over, however, the Ministry of Planning launched efforts to identify high priority projects and studies on them, with a view to coming up with more focused and defined plans to raise finances and implement them.

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Senior officials

Japan hopes calm will replace clashes at summit with U.S.

TOKYO (R) — Tokyo is hoping that a climate of calm will replace confrontation at a U.S.-Japan summit in Washington next week, giving the two nations a chance to assess just where their relationship should be heading.

"Ways to deepen U.S.-Japan relations, which are critical in the Asian-Pacific region, will top the meeting's agenda," Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama said Sunday, noting his Jan. 11 summit with U.S. President Bill Clinton comes at the start of a year marking the 50th anniversary of World War II's end.

Analysts of U.S.-Japan ties agree the summit is unlikely to yield anything like the fireworks seen at the February 1994 summit where Mr. Clinton met then-Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa.

Failure to clinch trade deals then not only prompted talk of a confrontational new era in trans-Pacific ties, but also rocked financial markets, sending the yen soaring against the dollar.

Pew expect a replay of that drama next week.

Behind this year's low-key mood are factors including domestic distractions for both leaders, greater attention to booming economies else-

where in Asia, and the resolution — in form if not in fact — of many of 1994's economic rows.

"In the United States, the president wants to have domestic achievements and for Mr. Murayama, the priority is also domestic issues," said political scientist Kuniko Inoguchi.

Mr. Clinton faces a Republican Congress born of the Democrats' stunning electoral defeat in November.

Where Japan will be placed on the U.S. congressional agenda remains to be seen. "It's not clear if Japan will matter much in Congress — it may be absorbed with other things," one U.S.-Japan expert said.

Mr. Murayama, too, is dogged by domestic worries.

These include fears that his Socialist Party may come apart and questions about how his unwieldy ruling coalition, which includes the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), will fare in parliament and in local elections next April.

The coalition faces a huge opposition bloc in the recently launched New Frontier Party, which aims to topple the government in general elections, maybe as soon as this autumn.

Concern has also been

raised about the health of the 70-year-old Murayama after he cancelled some official duties this week due to a cold.

Some in Japan worry that domestic distractions, combined with the growing attention paid by both countries to Asia outside Japan, is weakening the bilateral alliance.

In an article this week, monthly magazine *Sentaku* noted fears that the relationship was "hollowing out" as Washington turned inward and Tokyo failed to shoulder its global burdens.

Not all analysts agree. "It is true that the Asian-Pacific region is getting more important for both nations but this does not mean the bilateral tie is less important," Ms. Inoguchi said.

"Structurally, the tie is more important since there are issues, such as Asian-Pacific regional matters, in which U.S.-Japan joint management is needed," she said.

Regional economic and security issues, including North Korea's alleged nuclear programme, are expected to rank high on the summit agenda.

The two leaders will also discuss cooperation ahead of next November's meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic

Cooperation (APEC) forum in Osaka, western Japan.

As host, Japan wants to ensure the meeting's success despite differences among members over how to flesh out an ambitious accord, reached at last year's meeting in Jakarta, or toppling regional trade barriers within a quarter-century.

U.S. interest in Japan's efforts to deregulate its economy could come up at the summit, but bilateral trade disputes are expected to take a back seat.

The two sides in recent months have cleared away many of the rows highlighted in last year's economic talks.

After stagnating for months, talks on government procurement and insurance produced pacts last Oct. 1, although the two sides failed to resolve a tougher dispute over better access to Japan's market for cars and car parts.

Talks on auto trade, which accounts for two-thirds of the \$60 billion U.S.-Japan trade gap, are set to resume later this month.

Negotiators have also come close to reaching an agreement on another area given high priority by Washington, better access to Japan's huge financial services market.



File photo dated Dec. 18, 1994 showing South African Housing Minister Joe Slovo at the ANC National Congress. The former South African Communist Party leader during the apartheid years and minister of housing in the

government of national unity of President Nelson Mandela died early Friday at the age of 68 after his long battle with bone cancer (AFP photo)

S. African communist leader Slovo dies

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Joe Slovo, a life-long fighter against apartheid who went from a Lithuanian hamlet to become housing minister in South Africa's first democratic government, died of cancer Friday at the age of 68.

President Nelson Mandela, a close friend who saw Mr. Slovo at his home Thursday night shortly before his death, described the minister as "great African patriot".

"Joe Slovo dedicated his life to the struggle for justice, democracy and freedom in our country," Mr. Mandela said in a statement announcing his death from bone marrow cancer this month.

Concern has been expressed over the health of Mr. Mandela, who underwent an eye operation last year. His spokesman Joel Netshitenzhe told Reuters Friday, Mr. Mandela was in good health and rested after a Christmas and New Year holiday break.

But he faces a punishing schedule, starting with a visit to India — the first country to impose sanctions against apartheid South Africa —

late this month.

A burly man with a shock of white hair before cancer took its toll, he returned to South Africa in 1990 after his release from prison.

De Klerk legalised the ANC and the SACP. Mr. Slovo had joined at the age of 16.

He became housing minister in Mr. Mandela's government of national unity after the ANC won a sweeping victory in the April elections.

The portfolio is an important one in a government seeking to redress the inequities of apartheid, and Mr. Slovo had pledged decent housing for all South Africans.

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Doctors earlier this week advised him to rest, but he continued to work to the end, holding daily meetings with his director-general Billy Cobbett and members of his staff. Mr. Cobbett said it was still "far too early" to name his successor.

The National Party, which

instituted racial segregation after coming to power in 1948 and fought bitterly for white supremacy until Mr. De Klerk announced in 1990 an end to apartheid, said it had developed a "healthy respect" for Mr. Slovo.

"Although Mr. Slovo was a political opponent, and there was no secret regarding our political difference," said party spokesman Martin Van Schalkwyk.

"Since his appointment as minister, he played a very constructive role in government," Mr. Van Schalkwyk said. He described Mr. Slovo's death as "a great loss to the people of this country" who had dedicated his life to the "liberation of the oppressed".

He also became in 1985 the first white member of the National Executive of the ANC, to which the SACP was allied, and was chief of staff of the ANC's military wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation).

McCurry gets White House press post

WASHINGTON (USA) —

President Bill Clinton told reporters State Department spokesman Mike McCurry will become White House press secretary after a short transition period. Mr. McCurry said he will start his new duties Friday, attending senior staff meetings and splitting his time between White House and State. He said he will not begin briefing at the White House until he is up to speed on all aspects of administration policy.

"This is the kind of behaviour which we should not accept or condone in the new Malawi," he said.

MCCURRY spokesman Dr. Heatherwick Ntata told Reuters he believed the attacks were planned in advance. He said the MCP had restrained its own supporters otherwise there would have been "a very violent blood bath."

Diplomats said violence was possible in a country which split along ethnic lines during the elections that brought Mr. Muluzi and his United Democratic Front to power.

"I condemn without reservation these acts of wanton destruction," said Mr. Muluzi, who ousted Mr. Bandu after 30 years of autocratic rule in the country's first multi-party elections last May.

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World News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1995 5



Chechen volunteers fight Russian soldiers for the control of Grozny. President Boris Yeltsin announced that special forces are on their way to reinforce Russian contingent in the

Chechenya crisis could threaten CFE treaty

LONDON (Agencies) — The crisis over Chechenya could threaten a landmark European arms treaty and has provoked fresh Russian appeals that the agreement should be changed to reflect Moscow's concerns about the troubled Caucasus, diplomats say.

The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty, signed in 1990 by members of NATO and the now-defunct Warsaw Pact, provides for the biggest cuts in arms control history in tanks, armoured vehicles and other equipment.

Despite the end of the cold war, the agreement was widely seen as a cornerstone of security on the continent.

But it has already run into trouble. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant the treaty's provisions were delayed and Russia has complained for almost two years about limits on equipment deployment, which must be met by November.

Russia says limits on its southern flank are too strict given problems in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh and now Chechenya.

Western allies and Mos-

cow's former satellites in Eastern Europe have refused to change the treaty, drawing a threat from Russia to quit the pact altogether early last year.

With broader economic and political relations between the West and Russia now threatened by the Chechenya crisis and Moscow already at odds with NATO over expansion into Eastern Europe, the treaty could be in serious trouble, diplomats say.

"The Russians have moved a lot of equipment down into Chechenya and they are well in excess of what the treaty permits," said one diplomat who asked not to be identified.

"They say the fighting has justified their earlier appeals to revise the whole thing," he said.

Diplomats say it now looks increasingly unlikely that Russia will meet the November deadline to comply with the limits.

They were already over the top before Chechenya and if they don't meet the deadline, they will be in violation. That would be se-

rious," said another diplomat.

Senior NATO officials are due to meet in Brussels next Wednesday for a regular meeting to review progress on implementing the treaty.

Diplomats said the problems caused by Chechenya were bound to come up and that the issue had already been raised with Moscow.

"What they (the Russians) said to us was that they had moved equipment down there but that some of it had been destroyed anyway, in the fighting around Grozny," said one diplomat.

Diplomats said it was not clear exactly how much equipment had been moved to Chechenya. The CFE treaty covers only military hardware, not troop deployments.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has already appealed

to the West to agree changes to the pact, arguing that it reflects the old East-West divide rather than current realities.

Diplomats said Russia had also failed to notify other European states of its troop movements into Chechenya, under the terms of a Vienna agreement designed to promote security by giving full information on military deployments.

Russian diplomats said these confidence and security-building measures were valid only in peacetime and that Moscow was effectively at war with the breakaway region.

Meanwhile, President Yeltsin's gamble on winning a quick victory in Chechenya could have disastrous consequences and cost him the much-needed backing of the armed forces, analysts in Moscow said.

"The military understand that once again they have been used as a political tool, and were sent in to Chechenya simply to improve Yeltsin's plummeting popularity ratings," said Alexander Kononov, director of the Russian Academy of Science's Military Policy Centre.

The Kremlin's mixing of politics and armed force in the intervention in the breakaway Caucasus republic has turned out to be a disaster and an undertaking for which the Russian army conspicuously lacks any enthusiasm.

U.N. seeks more troops for Bosnia

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations has asked for another 6,000 peacekeeping troops to monitor the latest ceasefire in Bosnia, a U.N. spokesman said Friday as officials struggled to cement the truce.

Diplomats from the international "contact group" on Bosnia agreed a strategy for advancing the peace process at a meeting in Bonn and were presenting it to their governments for approval, a diplomatic source said.

The contact group officials — from the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany — did not disclose details but agreed to meet again in Paris Tuesday.

The four-month cessation of hostilities signed Dec. 31 calls for the deployment of United Nations troops between rival Serb and Bosnian government forces.

"We need more troops to monitor the ceasefire in Bosnia," the spokesman told Reuters in Zagreb. "A request has been made for another 6,000 troops to be sent in."

Countries already providing troops for the U.N. Pro-

tection Forces in Bosnia had been asked to send more.

There are currently around 23,000 United Nations troops in Bosnia, but U.N. commanders in the field say this is not enough to monitor hundreds of kilometres of front lines.

Fighting has generally subsided in Bosnia since the cessation of hostilities agreement was agreed, with the exception of the northwestern Bihać enclave, where rebel Serbs and Muslims have not signed the pact.

The contact group officials — from the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany — did not disclose details but agreed to meet again in Paris Tuesday.

The statement by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić appeared to indicate that he was ready to abide by the ceasefire, which the Serb leadership hopes will effectively freeze the territory it holds.

The statement however made clear that a high state of combat readiness would still be maintained in the 70 per cent of the former Yugos-

lav republic controlled by the Serbs.

The United Nations, which has been trying to tie down details of the ceasefire in a series of meetings between rival military commanders, said a session of the Sarajevo Joint Commission on implementing the ceasefire scheduled for Thursday was cancelled after the Bosnian Serbs refused to show up.

The Serbs were protesting at the Bosnian government's failure to withdraw all troops from a demilitarized zone on Mount Igman just outside the city by a Wednesday deadline.

"This was a certain setback in facilitating the process of cessation of hostilities. But we must remember that this peace process will be a painful one. The parties still enormously mistrust each other," U.N. spokesman Alex Ivankovic said.

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lav government troops had completed their pullout from the demilitarized zone. But three lookout posts were still occupied by government soldiers as of Friday morning.

A U.N. helicopter reconnaissance of the zone with Bosnian Muslim and Serb officers aboard was planned for Friday.

Mr. Ivankovic said the U.N. hoped the Bosnian Serbs would reopen civilian supply roads to Sarajevo Friday or Saturday as a gesture of goodwill on the Serbs' Christmas weekend.

The U.N. reported just nine ceasefire violations throughout Bosnia in the past 24 hours — seven by the Serbs, one by government troops and one incident involving both sides.

There was fighting east of the Bangladeshi U.N. compound in the town of Velika Kladusa in the Bjeljaca enclave.

A United Nations resupply convoy reached the Bjeljaca enclave on Thursday night, just after peacekeepers there had run out of fuel as a result of blockade by rebel militiamen and virtually baited all activity.

Chirac, their party's founder, who has already declared his candidacy but trails third in the polls.

Mr. Balladur is expected to announce his candidacy between Jan. 16 and 20 following a carefully orchestrated build-up of endorsements from cabinet members. Press reports say he has already rented a campaign headquarters.

Ten cabinet ministers have publicly endorsed Mr. Balladur this week, while only three have backed his most serious rival on the right, Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac.

Social Affairs Minister Simone Veil, the official number two in the cabinet, told reporters Friday: "I said a few weeks ago the prime minister would make a great president. I say today I hope he will announce his candidacy very soon."

Europe-1 Radio said at least 69 Gaullist parliamentarians would publish a call next week for Mr. Balladur to run in preference to Mr.

government interference, citing apparent efforts to slow or torpedo corruption probes.

The left, cast into disarray by Mr. Delors' shock withdrawal on Dec. 11, was further unsettled this week by Mr. Jospin's offer to stand for the Socialist Party.

Mr. Jospin's long-standing Socialist rival, ex-Prime Minister Laurent Fabius, implicitly disavowed his candidacy Friday, saying: "We must choose a person... capable of uniting all Socialists and the non-Socialist left."

"Lionel Jospin was the first to declare himself, even a little ahead of time. We must see now whether there are other contenders."

The small Radical Party, whose maverick businessman-turned-politician Bernard Tapie grabbed 12 per cent of the vote in last year's European Parliament elections, condemned Mr. Jospin in a statement as "exactly the opposite of what the left needs today."

France's Barre bides time; left split on Jospin

PARIS (R) — Former Prime Minister Raymond Barre kept France guessing on Friday over whether he would enter an increasingly crowded presidential race and an offer by former Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin to run split the left.

Mr. Barre, 70, an unaffiliated centrist, said in a radio interview he would take up to three months to decide whether to contest the two-round election on April 23 and May 7.

Polls show public support for Mr. Barre has soared by about 15 percentage points since outgoing European Commission President Jacques Delors, a moderate Socialist, announced last month he would not run to succeed Socialist President François Mitterrand, who has been head of state for 14 years.

Commentators said Mr. Barre, a pro-European economist who was prime minister from 1976 to 1981 after serving on the European Commission, could take

votes from the conservative frontrunner, Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, as well as the centre-left.

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Challenge of new Cabinet

NO MATTER whom he chooses to join his government, Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the man who led Jordan's administration twice in the Kingdom's past five crucial years, faces a formidable challenge and a historic legacy brought mainly by the signing last year of a peace treaty with Israel. Sharif Zeid's mandate appears focussed on three fronts: The peace process, relations with the Palestinian leadership and other Arab countries and the formidable task of political, economic and administrative reforms.

On the peace front Jordan needs to consolidate the peace and help achieve breakthroughs on other tracks, and it needs to take economic advantage of the new era.

The Jordanian leadership, in a warmer peace with Israel than Egypt's, is poised to play a greater role than that of Cairo mediating between the Israelis on the one side and the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese on the other. If Jordan aspires to a greater and more secure regional role, it has to be forthcoming in formulating its own strategy pushing it forward. The notion that Jordan did not sign peace for economic reasons as well is not accurate. Jordan should win dividends of peace just like Egypt and Israel did when they signed their Camp David Accords in 1978. The Kingdom should make clear to Israel, the U.S. and Europe that for peace to hold anywhere in the region its effects must be felt by ordinary people, those who for decades paid the price of war and instability. Jordan did not only make peace to regain its rights, of which it has been deprived for decades, but also served every other party to the process in one way or the other. It provided Israel with peace with another Arab country than Egypt, it gave the Syrians a block upon which to build, the Americans another breakthrough and the rest of the Arabs an example to follow. More important, it added another block to the wall of stability in the Middle East, a stability that is very important for the interests of the U.S., Europe, the West and world peace in general.

On the front of Jordanian-Palestinian relations, an issue of vital importance to Jordan's sacred national unity, a great deal of misunderstanding and mistrust has developed over the past year. While we hope the Palestinian leadership would do its part to improve bilateral ties, we believe that the new government will be in a better position to contribute to a resumption of constructive dialogue and genuine cooperation with our brethren in Palestine. While we recognise the efforts of the Majali government towards Arab reconciliation a great deal of work lies ahead. The Arab League should be viewed as the best forum for such a move at the present stage.

But the local scene, where genuine change that will affect the future of the country, is certainly the most important. In this regard, reform is needed in three areas: Politics, the economy and government administration. In politics, a minimum level of national consensus is overdue. In this regard, it is most heartening to note that the Islamic Action Front is moving closer to the mainstream consensus. Also important is a new look and a fresh approach to the subject of national unity. The issue needs to be moved from being merely a slogan into practical application that would address the grievances of all and lead to an even split of power and social justice.

Economic problems are very obvious to all the concerned bodies and politicians. Their resolution, however, hinges on making a greater effort at real reforms including privatisation and deregulation. In this vein, the issue of administrative reform should be on the top of the government's list of priorities. For unless the government body that plans and executes policy is cleaned up and modernised all talk about other reform will be meaningless.

Perhaps the formation of Sharif Zeid's government will give the clue to where we are heading.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Kellani

And the Jordanian march continues

A GREEK MARATHON — that is the best way to describe the change of governments in Jordan since it is abundantly clear that every new head of government is taking the torch from his predecessor and running that extra mile in the course of the country's advance.

The resignation of Prime Minister Abdal Salam Majali and His Majesty King Hussein's choice of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker as the head of the new government were not exactly a surprise or shock. I might even venture to say that when Dr. Majali was appointed prime minister on May 29, 1993, the course Jordan was following and had to follow was spelt out very distinctly. The country needed someone like Dr. Majali to take resolute steps and run that extra mile towards making peace with Israel.

Indeed, Dr. Majali successfully leaped that extra mile as we all witnessed when Israel and Jordan signed their historic peace treaty on Oct. 26, but it is naive to suggest that Dr. Majali's resignation came as a response to mounting criticism from Parliament and political parties and worsening relations between the executive authority and legislature as a result of his government's political and economic policies.

For practical and technical purposes, the Majali government was mandated with certain specific tasks, starting with amending the Election Law, introducing economic reforms, and of course making peace with Israel among other things. No government headed by a politician with hopes for a political career would have undertaken to perform these tasks if only because of the minefields that surrounded the course to these goals (remember why the government had to wait more than one year before introducing the sales tax law in June 1994). More than a dozen members of the cabinet who had parliamentary aspirations waged a strong campaign to put off introducing the controversial levy as long as they were in office, obviously with an eye at their chances of election/relection in the November 1993 polls. But it was some of the former cabinet members who did enter Parliament who were the strongest proponents of the levy when the issue was debated in the House.

But Dr. Majali was courageous enough not only to shoulder the responsibilities that carried risks but also to ensure that the responsibilities were successfully served and the national goals were achieved despite the brickbats that greeted him along the way. The bouquet of peace was the best reward for him in the end. The country and its people deserved a lot to him.

It is easy to rule that the policies and practices of the Majali government were highly unpopular. But then, it is

no secret that any government implementing controversial but inevitable self-reliance-oriented economic and social reforms and introducing unpopular fiscal measures — the sales tax law for instance — in a society long used to state sponsorship would have been castigated whether in Jordan or anywhere else. The Majali cabinet was no exception. If anything, the government that succeeds the Majali cabinet should be reaping the benefits of the policies and measures adopted and implemented by its predecessor. Indeed there may be a few problems here and there, but then those are the inevitable legacy when governments change.

That does not mean, however, Sharif Zeid's task is any easier. The former commander-in-chief of the army who successfully led two governments since 1989 will shoulder the responsibility of streamlining the internal affairs of the country inasmuch as he also needs to advance Jordan's quest to bring about a better balance in inter-Arab relationships.

For one thing, any new government in Jordan at this point in history faces the task of tackling the high unemployment in the country. Any successful solution to this problem lies only through fundamental changes in the mindset of the people and the antiquated value system of our society. The recent national census has brought out some of the ridiculous but true features of the problem: for one thing, it found that there are 288,000 foreign workers in the country while an equal number of Jordanians remain unemployed. Among the 288,000 are 54,000 Sri Lankan domestic help, a figure that is totally unjustifiable, given the size of the Jordanian society and the average family income.

Take for instance, the finding that 107,000 families live under the poverty line with a monthly income of less than JD 120 and 32,000 of those families live in absolute poverty with a monthly income of less than JD 60, with many of their members unemployed. How do we solve this problem except through bringing about sweeping changes in the thinking of the people, given the high number of foreign workers in the country that indicates available employment opportunities? Jordanians will have to understand and appreciate the dignity of labour, whether in farms or in petrol stations, rather than living in a superficial state of mind boosted by a false sense of social superiority. Our information media have to play a major role in bringing about that change, but the government has to begin the initiative.

Despite the immense efforts exerted by His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the mindset of our bureaucrats remains little

changed towards accepting the inevitability of dramatic changes in approach if Jordan were to reap the dividends of peace through attracting investments. This is also an area that the Sharif Zeid government would have to tackle by taking the bull by the horns. The present stage in our lives is too precious and important to be governed by sensitivities that prompt government leaders to balk at injecting young blood into our bureaucracy to replace many civil servants who serve little purpose other than being heavy paperweights in their offices.

Improving relations between the executive and legislative is another task cut out for the Sharif Zeid government. But, given the high respect and clean record of Sharif Zeid and the popularity the prime-minister-designate enjoys among the people and political leaders, this should not be a major problem; if anything, the change in relationship could be automatic as much as it would be a result of a concerted effort.

The same applies to a large extent to Jordan's relations with the Arab World. Take for instance, the "quiet" nature of Amman-Damascus ties. Little improvement could be expected in this context as long as Syria did not actually makes peace with Israel, and once it did then the way for Jordanian-Syrian relations is automatically opened. Any shifts in the present coolness in ties would fall short of the desired level of warmth until such time a Syrian-Israeli peace agreement is thrashed out.

As to the Gulf states, it is only a matter of time before the so-called isolation of Jordan is completely ended. We have made major achievements in improving our ties with several Gulf states, and those which are still cool to our goodwill gestures and sincere wish to see a better atmosphere prevail in the Arab World would find out for themselves the folly in their approach.

But that does not imply that our government should sit back and relax, waiting for things to happen. It has to maintain its efforts for pan-Arab unity and solidarity and improved relations with all members of the one Arab family but not at the expense of our national interests and principles cherished so much by our leadership and people. History has taught us that sacrificing our national interests and priorities for the sake of Arab interests and priorities is not appreciated and we end up the losers.

In sum, Sharif Zeid takes over the helm of our government at another major juncture in our history, and, hopefully, he would easily run his part of that extra mile in the great Jordanian marathon, holding aloft the torch of our march.



New government to face host of domestic issues

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

PROSPECTS of a new government, domestic issues, the situation in Chechnya, the situation in the Arab occupied lands and other topics attracted columnists and editorial writers of the local press in the past week.

While the government of Prime Minister Abdal Salam Majali busied itself with the peace treaty with Israel, the new government is bound to face a very huge task in dealing with domestic issues said Al Dostour daily. Majali did his best and served his country with honour at a very critical stage achieving for Jordan a very vital objective but the new government would be facing no lesser mission mainly at the domestic level which abounds with chronic problems said the paper.

This view was echoed by Mohammad Daoud, a columnist for Al Dostour, who expressed the opinion that domestic issues pose a serious challenge to the new government. We cannot remain impulsive and waiting for matters to improve as a result of the peace treaty but we ought to embark immediately on measures to improve the internal situation, said the writer. Among the main issues facing the government he added was the rising cost of living, unemployment and poverty.

Mahmoud Rimawi took another view expressing hope that the new government would give priority to improving Jordan's relations with the other Arab states. What we need, said the writer, is to improve the Jordanian-Palestinian relations as a first step and reassess Jordan's role in supporting the struggle of the Palestinian people. He said that Jordan should seek an Arab summit so as to revive pan-Arab solidarity

ity which is needed to back just Arab causes.

A writer in Al Ra'i said that the municipal and other concerned authorities ought to find a solution to the problem of the Samir Rifai School for Girls in downtown Amman because its main gates open on a busy main street. The fast moving cars along that street have been responsible for many accidents with girl students being the victim, said Nazih, a columnist for Al Ra'i. The writer said that the location of that school was an error from the start but at least the concerned authorities can do something to remedy the situation by opening gates for the safe access and exit of the school. Especially during rush hours.

Jordanians are following

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Tareq Masarweh a writer for Al Ra'i criticised the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources for inviting fuel truck owners to bid for the lowest rates for transporting crude oil from Iraq to the refinery in Zarqa. The writer said that the ministry has not consulted with the Transport Ministry which concerns itself with the question of axial weights and the damage to the roads in Jordan. Competing fuel truck owners will of course offer rates favourable to the Energy Ministry but will not take into account the amounts of fuel which their trucks carry, he said. Noting that the Energy Ministry is offering JD 7.25 for a tonne of transported crude down from JD 16.85. He said the move would tempt the truck owners to load their vehicles with as many tonnes of fuel as possible to get higher prices regardless of

with deep concern and interest the outcome of the battles in Chechnya because they support the Chechen people's drive for independence said Taber Al Adwan, a writer for Al Dostour. The writer said that the ministry has not consulted with the Transport Ministry which concerns itself with the question of axial weights and the damage to the roads in Jordan. Competing fuel truck owners will of course offer rates favourable to the Energy Ministry but will not take into account the amounts of fuel which their trucks carry, he said. Noting that the Energy Ministry is offering JD 7.25 for a tonne of transported crude down from JD 16.85. He said the move would tempt the truck owners to load their vehicles with as many tonnes of fuel as possible to get higher prices regardless of

independence.

Referring to the situation in the occupied Arab territories, Mohammad Kawash said that Israel can never achieve any peace with the Palestinians as long as it continues to

U.S.-Algerian connection under new scrutiny

By Joseph Fitchett

PARIS — The international fallout from the hijacking of an Air France jet will include fresh scrutiny of a U.S. connection with Algeria's Islamic fundamentalist opposition — a largely symbolic foothold established in Washington by human rights groups and a few political exiles to gain visibility for their cause.

For months, France has been irritated by U.S. doubts about the policies of Algeria's military government and calls for dialogue with the Muslim-led opposition.

The threat of a fundamentalist takeover in Algeria is France's deepest foreign policy worry, and French officials publicly insist that Washington's military government and calls for dialogue with the Muslim-led opposition.

In private, French officials frequently make the point that no American has been killed by terrorists in Algeria who have murdered 25 Frenchmen and a number of foreigners from several other countries.

The implication is that Islamic fundamentalists have some special U.S. ties, a charge rejected by U.S. officials. They say the small number of Americans in Algeria explains the absence of casualties.

The French government, anxious to avoid an Islamic takeover in Algeria before elections in France in the spring, has resisted any dialogue with the Muslim groups and sought instead to bolster the Algerian government.

French officials have complained publicly about the unwillingness of the United States and Germany to provide more financial support to Algiers and their readiness to give political asylum to opposition leaders.

The emotional force of French concern, however, seems have more to do with history, specifically the growth of U.S. importance in Algeria after the war of independence with France. While largely unofficial, American aid to Algerian revolutionaries who won independence still rankles in France, which has a traditional postcolonial interest in Algeria and the rest of North Africa.

U.S. anti-colonialism in the 1950s and '60s was aimed primarily at preempting Soviet influence. But independent Algeria expanded its U.S. political and economic ties, especially in the oil business, in a way that is rare among former French colonies.

And the Clinton administration has accepted French calls for the West to promote other Algerian political factions in order to prevent an Islamic takeover that could destabilise neighbouring countries in North Africa.

International Herald Tribune

Features

Sharif Zeid in cabinet consultations

(Continued from page 1)

Other expected ministers are: Bassel Jardaneh, Ibrahim Izzeddin, Kamel Al Ajlouni, and Ahmad Hulayyeh.

In a letter accepting Dr. Majali's resignation the King praised his efforts over the 18 months of his tenure to serving the country at a time

when the Kingdom was facing huge challenges and pressures.

Dr. Majali, in his resignation letter to the King, said his government was stepping down to open the way for a new government that would assume the responsibility of dealing with the challenges ahead.

Parliament blocs confident of role

(Continued from page 1)

are trying to put their relations back on track with the establishment have started to appear lately and that is expected to make Sharif Zeid's effort to bring about reconciliation with the opposition bear fruit.

The other large though less coherent bloc in the House is the National Action Front (NAF), which includes 18 deputies. Sharif Zeid is not expected to have a hard time winning the confidence of this bloc though it is expected to make some demands on the portfolios its members will have if they are to join the government due to its strong relations with the outgoing cabinet of Dr. Majali.

"We took part in cabinets at the hardest of times and we are willing to participate in the new government provided that we have real and active participation," Chairman of the Bloc Abdul Baqi Jammo told the Jordan Times.

The 10-member National Democratic Coalition has warmly welcomed the appointment of Sharif Zeid

as prime minister-designate and are hopeful for a productive relationship with the new government.

Sharif Zeid can count on the support of the coalition which includes many parliamentary heavyweights of whom some have worked with Sharif Zeid before and enjoy good relationship with him. The bloc includes Hamoud Abu Janous, Abdul Karim Kabariti, Saleh Israfil and Saad Hayel Srour.

Sharif Zeid is expected to have any easy time winning the support of the Jordanian National Bloc, which includes nine parliamentarians who follow centrist policies that are traditionally pro-government.

Awad Khleifat, an independent deputy who had served in the two previous governments of Sharif Zeid, was confident that the prime minister-designate will consult with all parliamentary blocs and win their support before forming the government.

"That, they said, will ensure a smoother executive-legislative relationship than the one that preceded it.

key member of an economic team under Sharif Zeid along with Dr. Ziad Fariz, who now serves as advisor to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, and Abdullah Ensor, now a member of Parliament, who has also served as minister of planning, minister of education (for a short period) and minister of industry and trade.

However, there was no indication on Friday whether Sharif Zeid in fact wanted to replace Planning Minister Hisham Al Khatib, who has worked with Mr. Jardaneh in a former cabinet but as minister of energy and mineral resources.

Rima Khalaf, the first woman member of a Jordanian Cabinet since Inam Mufit in the early 80s, is too deep into structural reforms in the investment climate in the country in her present capacity as minister of trade and industry. Some sources said Dr. Khalaf was expected to be retained in the job, but Deputy Ali Abu Ragheb, head of the Financial Committee of the Lower House, was reportedly a strong contender for the post.

Mr. Abu Ragheb's appointment as minister of trade and industry would leave the possibility open that Dr. Khalaf could be appointed minister at the Prime Ministry for economic affairs or advisor at the Royal Palace.

Mr. Abu Ragheb has served as minister of supply, minister of trade and industry as well as minister of energy and mineral resources in the past.

Regardless of the possible changes, some of the economic team in the present cabinet of Dr. Majali is expected to be appointed advisors either to King Hussein or Crown Prince Hassan because of the need to maintain the continuity in economic reforms and policies under implementation in the country.

The overriding factor in any possible scenario of appointment in the government would be the nature of agreements that Sharif Zeid might strike with the various parliamentary blocs. If anything, some of the speculation and rumours could prove totally irrelevant if the blocs insist on some of the key portfolios as the price for their endorsement of the Sharif Zeid government.

As far as the economic team is concerned, Basel Jardaneh, who served as minister of finance during some of the crucial years for Jordan's economy in the late 80s and early 90s, is tipped to be brought back to his job by Sharif Zeid.

Mr. Jardaneh, a leading banker who is now president of Royal Jordanian, was the

AFM turnover, prices plunged

(Continued from page 12)

equity of the companies listed in the market dropped to JD 3.397 billion from JD 3.463 billion in 1993 (figures of book values were not immediately available).

Total number of shares in the market rose to 6,777,674,424 from 529,017,345 in 1993.

The government issued permission to 32 foreign companies to enter the market with a total capital of JD 195 million, but the actual capital that entered was JD 4.2 million, or 2.2 per cent of the permitted amount. Applications by 16 other foreign companies with a capital of JD 90 million are pending with the government.

Fresh stock entering the primary market totalled JD 44,850,670 in value, up 93.1 per cent from JD 23,061,501 in 1993.

Daily trading during the year averaged JD 2.02 million in 1994 (245 days of business) compared with JD 3.96 million in 1993 (244 days of business). The decline was 49.1 per cent.

Total number of shares traded during 1994 was 174,475,801, down 35.1 per cent from the 270,439,340 shares that changed hands during 1993. The decline was 35.1 per cent.

The daily average of shares traded during 1994 was 716,228, compared with 1,109,356 in 1993. The decline was 35.4 per cent.

The total number of contracts concluded during the year was 253,654, compared with 335,553 in 1993 (decline 24 per cent).

The daily average of contracts during 1994 was 1,035, compared with 1,375 in 1993 (decline 24.7 per cent).

A comparison showed

the outgoing prime minister, in an interview with the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN), denied that the reasons for the change in government was his team's failure to contain the opposition and focus sufficient attention on improving relations with the Arab World.

Saudi Arabia's paper parliament seeks a role

Leslie Plommer, recently in Riyadh, surveys the vacant opulence of the country's majlis al shura

his appointees.

"We have no one to satisfy but God and the king," says the shura's deputy chairman, Abdullah Nasheed.

His is probably the most educated political assembly in the world. More than half the members have PhDs, Dr. Nasheed's being in geology from Leeds University. The mix includes businessmen, lawyers, engineers, Islamic, sharia law specialists, and senior officials. Regional and clan interests are also represented.

Underpinning all this is thousands of yards of thick carpets on which the small band of inhabitants of Saudi Arabia's new majlis al shura (consultative council) are treading very, very softly.

The eager young staff guide are pained by the mockery to which their infant assembly so easily lends itself. "Wait a little. Slowly things will change," they urge.

Certainly, after 30 years of broken promises, something is better than nothing. But this is still a paper parliament, set up in 1992 by a royal decree which also allows the monarch to dissolve it. All the members are

rests with the king. This produces a paradox which would-be reformers in the middle class have yet to resolve: the institution of absolute monarchy which impedes political modernisation and itself indulges in the controlled use of religious zealotry is the only institution capable of protecting them from the forces of Islamic regression.

There are many prohibitions, but under King Fahd their daughters are educated, their roofs sport satellite dishes, and their art exhibitions are put beyond the reach of the religious police by government permit.

"Consensus is very important here," observed a Western diplomat with long experience of the region. "This council will never be anything but a shura in the Islamic (consultative) sense. It will never be an English parliament. That would mean shouting, insults, division."

Without a civil society independent of the state — the intricate network taken for granted in the West of professional associations, unions, parties, clubs and the media — the arbitration of opinion in Saudi Arabia

is the insertion of some teeth into the bodies that more directly affect their lives — the regional councils established by the same set of royal decrees in 1992.

So far, these remain talking shops for the officials who run the provinces anyway.

But at the national level many Saudis have something close to a horror of confrontation politics. One need only mention Kuwait's assembly, where ministers are regularly summoned to be raked over the coals, to see the alarm such an example evokes.

They feed public opinion to the king and his ministers, they propose laws to the cabinet, they examine and advise on government programmes, they invite ministers for questioning. Everything is done, however, with a certain and politesse that betokens total dependence on the king's pleasure.

The policies of 50 years ago are no longer adequate," said a moderate Islamic.

"We are like two trains. One is going 500 mph. It consists of modern cities, big institutions and state of the art technology. The

starting point might be

the press box which overlooks the shura chamber. It is empty much of the time: reporters are allowed in for the opening, only to be ejected for debates.

The Guardian



A Syrian civilian paints a portrait of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, featuring the statement "peace is a noble aim and a precious goal," on a wall of Damascus airport (AFP photo)

Israel and Syria: Peace through strategic parity?

By Israel Shahak

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM holds that the collapse of the USSR has left us weaker. The same argument is being applied to other Arab states and to the Palestinians. In my view, the conventional wisdom, so often mistaken about Middle Eastern realities, is totally mistaken in the case of Syria.

The main reason for the tentative progress in the present Israel-Syria negotiations and Israel's unusual readiness to make some concessions to Syria is that they are being conducted in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and the consequent increase in Syrian military power.

It is well-known that

President Hafez Al Assad proclaimed for years that he would only conduct negotiations with Israel from a position of strength. As interpreted by Ron Ben Yishay in *Yediot Ahronot* on Sept. 16, this meant achieving strategic parity with Israel.

The market management heard 24 complaints, mostly related to unauthorised dealings, bounced cheques and investors failing to meet their obligations to the brokers, and took appropriate action. Dr. Touqan did not spell out the nature of the action taken.

Stocks of eight companies were removed from the trading floor during the year because of accumulated losses that exceeded 75 per cent of their capital. Four others were also removed for other reasons that were not specified in the annual report.

All companies listed in the market should provide all details of developments that might have an impact on their share prices. Such information should be provided as quickly as the developments occur.

The list of stockholders should be reorganised in a manner that would facilitate easy and uncomplicated transactions.

The management of the market would have the right to adjust the capital requirements of brokers as and when it finds fit to do so.

The capital requirement of brokerage firms which wanted to deal on behalf of others and also operate own

acquisition of these high-quality weapons by Syria and the Saudi funding of these purchases was attributable to their shared fear that "Israel might attempt to impose on Syria a peace on Israel's terms, exactly as Israel had attempted to do during the Lebanese war."

In such an attempt, the Israeli army, breaking through the Golan Heights cease-fire lines, could reach the outskirts of Damascus in less than 24 hours." In Ben Yishay's view, Israel had this option until a few years ago. "Right now, however, Syrian air is capable of stopping an Israeli attack simultaneously on two fronts, in the Golan Heights and in Lebanon. Moreover, if the Israeli air force attacks Syria, as it did in October 1973, in order to destroy half of Syria's military and civilian infrastructure, Mr. Assad would be able to retaliate, with no less devastation," which he could not do in 1973.

It is well-known that President Hafez Al Assad proclaimed for years that he would only conduct negotiations with Israel from a position of strength. As interpreted by Ron Ben Yishay in *Yediot Ahronot* on Sept. 16, this meant achieving strategic parity with Israel.

The Israeli view is that the Syrians have what Israel calls "non-conventional weapons," namely accurate surface-to-surface missiles which can be equipped with chemical warheads. Against these, Israel is virtually defenceless. Therefore, for the first time in Middle Eastern history, a state, in this case Syria, is capable of defending itself effectively against Israeli attack.

No Israeli expert has explained why, as Ben Yishay put it, "during the long years when the USSR and its satellites supported Syria, it could not really advance towards strategic parity with Israel." I would guess that Soviet policies had, at least since the 1962 Cuban crisis, been secretly coordinated with the U.S. Things deteriorated in this respect under Gorbachev,

who, according to Ben Yishay, "pretty soon after assuming power told Assad in no uncertain terms that he expected him to make peace with Israel, even on Israeli terms. To make it clear that he meant business, Gorbachev stopped all Soviet weapons sales to Syria. For some time he allowed the supplies of limited quantities of spare parts, but eventually even these were stopped."

For whatever reason, Gorbachev's policies were consistently pro-Israel. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the new rulers of Russia refused to sell any weapons to Syria except for hard currency, which Syria then hardly possessed. But as a consequence of Saudi funding and tacit U.S. support, Syria has been able to acquire quality weapons for hard cash. According to Israeli commentators, the countries now selling Syria high-quality weapons previously unobtainable from the USSR are primarily Russia, other states of the former USSR and North Korea. There can be no doubt that the Syrian army is now much better equipped than it was when Syria depended on Soviet supplies.

It is the new strategic parity which has led the Israeli establishment to believe in the sincerity of Syria's wish for peace. Professor Moshe Ma'oz, who has access to the Israeli security services, said in *Yediot* on Sept. 23 that

"although Syria keeps arming itself with weapons which can be lethal to us, its claim that the purpose of these armaments is strictly defensive is eminently credible. After all, Syria needs to deter Iraq. And its need to deter Israel is very much greater. It needs to avoid a repeat of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and to conduct negotiations from a position of strength. Right-

ly, Israel is doing exactly the same, buttressing its military and strategic standing so as to simultaneously negotiate from a position of strength."

How reliable will the U.S. be?

Ma'oz adds that Israeli military strength is derived partly from U.S. supplies of modern weaponry deliberately intended "to provide Israel with superiority over all neighbouring Arab states together." But he is aware that U.S. support for Israel is conditional on Israel's willingness to coordinate its policies with the U.S. "Once Israel gives away the Golan Heights to Syria, the U.S. as it has promised, will keep supplying the Israeli army with the most sophisticated modern weaponry in abundance, so that it may retain its strategic superiority over the entire Middle East even in peace time." Yet I doubt whether this is what Mr. Assad wants.

Amir Oren (*Da'var*, Sept. 30) agrees with Ben-Yishay that until 1991 the Americans, regardless of what they officially declared, didn't want Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights. It was Syrian participation against Iraq which changed American attitudes. Mr. Oren discussed Israeli relations with Syria against the background of steady reductions in the U.S. defence budget and the decrease of presidential power under Mr. Clinton. While other Israeli commentators assume that Israel may be generously rewarded by the U.S. for any accord with Syria, Mr. Oren believes that when the U.S. defence budgets are cut, it may be difficult to persuade Congress to grant Israel the huge sums it has come to expect.

Mr. Oren admits that "President Clinton loves Israel effusively and loves

Middle-East International

Arab economic structure cracks under low oil prices

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Low oil prices have caused cracks in the Arab economic after decades of state domination and a reluctance by governments to acknowledge the private sector's role in development.

Several Arab nations have embarked on sweeping reforms to tackle persistent economic woes and experts expect such programmes to gain momentum because of encouraging results and slackening aid from fellow oil producing countries.

In the oil-rich Gulf, low oil income has jolted Saudi Ara-

bia and its neighbours out of previous lavish spending, forcing them to slash expenditure, remove subsidies and hike services fees.

"The Arab economic structure is undergoing dramatic changes because of the decline in oil prices in the past years and expectations they will not see major improvement in the near future," a Gulf economist said.

"Oil and non-oil countries now realise the only way to offset such a decline is to reshape such a structure, which has been characterised by government control, tight

economic policies and lack of incentives," he added.

Arab states have suffered most from the drop in crude prices as oil is the main source of their income.

But for non-oil members, the drop was equally harmful as they depended heavily on aid from Gulf and other Arab oil producers which has plummeted to less than one fifth of its level in the early 1980s, when it averaged around \$5 billion a year.

The drop in oil prices has slashed total Arab oil earnings to around \$90 billion a year from a record \$212 bil-

lion in 1981, when crude prices were above \$30 barrel. In 1986, earnings dipped to \$53 billion as prices collapsed to below \$10.

Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and other Arab League nations have carried out reforms including privatisation, improvement of currency exchange and introduction of incentives for industrial projects with others planning to follow suit.

In the Gulf, home to 60 per cent of the world's oil, Saudi Arabia cut its 1995 spending by nearly six per cent over

1994 and 25 per cent over 1993. It also raised prices of petroleum products and services fees and is planning to privatise key public institutions.

Oman and Bahrain trimmed expenditure while similar cuts are expected in Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. They have also announced reform plans involving billions of dollars in self-offs.

It has become apparent that there is no going back to reforms as they are producing results and are the only way to revive Arab economies. I

think reform programmes will gain momentum in the coming years," a Gulf banker said.

According to official figures, the reforms have pushed up the Arab economy since being effectively implemented around five years ago.

The combined gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 3.2 per cent annually in real terms between 1990 and the 1992 compared with 1.9 per cent between 1986 and 1989.

The increase occurred despite negative growth rates in

Iraq, Kuwait and other regional oil producers due to the 1991 Gulf war.

The figures showed the budget deficit in non-oil Arab states was cut to \$6.28 billion in 1992 from \$10 billion in 1987. The cut was mainly due to a rise in revenues to \$38.7 billion from \$26.6 billion.

Although their trade balance continued to suffer a gap, the overall balance of payments recorded a surplus of around \$6.44 billion in 1986 compared with \$1.2 billion in 1987.

A report by the Arab Economic Unity Council showed

the reforms were also attracting part of the Arab overseas funds, estimated at \$600 to \$800 billion in real estate, stocks and banks deposits, mostly in the West.

"There has been a surge in Arab capital inflow in the past few liberalisation of trade and financial policies, and other measures," the report said.

It estimated such an inflow at around \$21 billion between 1989 and 1991 and said the Arab League's 22 members had the capacity to absorb up to \$995 billion in investment until the year 2030.

Saudi budget based on \$14 a barrel, expert says

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has conservatively estimated its oil revenues this year on the basis of a \$14 a barrel weighted average price for exports of about seven million barrels per day, a Saudi expert has said.

"Basically the (1995) budget is calculated on a weighted average of \$14 a barrel," the well-placed ex-

pert said.

He said Riyadh would probably earn more than from its oil in 1995 after suffering a sharp drop in income in 1994 when prices fell about a budgeted weighted average of about \$14.50 a barrel.

"Every price rise of \$1 a barrel means an increase in (Saudi) revenue by about

\$2.5 billion a year," he added.

According to Renter calculations, the weighted average for Saudi crude in 1994 was about \$14 a barrel.

The weighted average is now about \$14.90 a barrel — which could provide the kingdom with a nice bonus if the price is maintained or goes higher during the year.

The \$14 figure is below estimated given since the budget was announced Sunday.

A diplomat in Riyadh who monitors Saudi oil policy has estimated that the budget was based on a weighted average price for Saudi crude of \$15 a barrel.

"We could see better prices this year," he added. Saudi Arabia is the world's

largest exporter and producer with a daily output of about eight million barrels, of which about seven million goes for export.

The expert said the budget announced estimates oil revenues at about \$33.5 billion. The budget, which carries a deficit of \$4 billion, forecast total revenues of \$36 billion.

stated as important support, further weakness through 1.595 would lay the groundwork for a move toward 1.64-1.68. Benchmark resistance remains at 1.486, but there is intervening resistance near 1.54.

A gains the yen, the D-mark gained 1.3 per cent last week (and was essentially unchanged for the year). Medium term oscillators have been under pressure since mid October, but there are initial signs that momentum is beginning to firm up (even though they are yet overbought). This potentially important change will have to be monitored closely in coming weeks. Support exists at 59.60, with resistance coming in above 66.50.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The pound made some gains against the U.S. and the Deutsche mark, rising to USD/GBP 1.56 and DM/GBP 2.43. U.K. fundamentals continue to look good. While underlying inflation — retail price inflation less mortgage interest payments — picked up a little, rising to 2.3 per cent in November following October's low of 2 per cent — the lowest level in 27 years. Inflation still remains in the lower half of the Chancellor's 1.4- per cent target range. Real GDP rose 4.2 per cent in the third quarter following a 4.1 per cent increase for the second quarter and growth for 1994 should average an impressive 3.7 per cent.

However, with very little spare capacity left in the U.K. economy, inflation is likely to begin picking up soon and our London-based economists expect base rates to be increased by another 50 basis points sometime in the second quarter of 1995. Germany is expected to shift to a less accommodative monetary policy by the middle of next year. However, German officials rate — the Lombard and discount rates — are expected to remain unchanged during the first half of 1995 and that should widen the short-term interest differential between Germany and the U.K.

We therefore look for the pound to appreciate against the mark to DM/GBP 2.50 in 12-month's time and we expect the pound to follow the mark higher against the dollar to our 12-month forecast of USD/GBP 1.61. One risk for the pound, though, is political uncertainty in U.K. Prime Minister John Major's grip on the Conservative majority is rather tenuous and polls indicate that Conservatives would lose a parliamentary election if one were held this year.

Technical View: The British pound advanced 1.2 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Dec. 30. The currency posted a 5.8 per cent net gain for 1994. Sentiment continues to improve and is now oversold. Momentum is weak and has the potential to remain so until February. Important nearby support exists down to 1.526 U.S.\$/L, and a break below that level would allow for a test of the January low at \$1.456. Resistance exists near \$1.58, then \$1.645.

Against the DM, sterling fell 0.6 per cent last week and 5.6 per cent for the year. Momentum has peaked, suggesting that the rally since September is over. Resistance exists at 2.465, and nearby support exists at 2.41.

THE BETTER HALF... By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YALFE

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CINEE

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LUSSTY

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SMURTE

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Answer here: THE

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumble: FORGO

FIFTY WINNOW MINGLE

Answer: Why the watchmaker didn't get the raise — HIS TIMING WAS OFF

THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argric

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Reigning champion Cowboys open playoffs

DALLAS (AFP) — Receiver Michael Irvin scoffs at a U.S. magazine cover proclaiming "Dallas is dead," vowing the Cowboys will win their third straight Super Bowl before this month is over.

"We will do it. I promise," Irvin said. "We will go to the Super Bowl. We will get our third straight. We will do something no other team has done."

The Cowboys play host to Green Bay Sunday in a National Football League (NFL) quarter-final game. Other playoff games find stage at San Francisco and Cleveland at Pittsburgh Saturday plus Miami at San Diego Sunday.

Sport magazine's declaration of San Francisco as the NFL title favourite over the Cowboys was made into a poster that hangs in the Dallas locker room. The 49ers had the league's best record, beating Dallas in the process.

Dallas defeated Green Bay 42-31 in November, with star rusher Emmitt Smith gaining 133 yards on 32 carries. The Packers kept NFL rushing leader Barry Sanders to minus-1 yard last week to eliminate Detroit.

"I was very surprised at what they did to Barry and I applaud them for it," Smith said. "I'm sure they will try to shut me down the same way. They probably think there's no reason they can't do it to me."

Dallas had a first-round bye before facing the Packers, making the Cowboys anxious for action.

"I expect us to play with a lot more emotion," Smith said. "We know what's at stake. We don't want anyone kicking our behinds."

San Francisco might be the

team to do it in the NFL semi-finals, provided they get past the visiting Bears.

Chicago coach Dave Wannstedt, an assistant for Dallas two years ago, knows the unlikely task his team faces against the NFL regular-season champions.

"We're such a big underdog that we might have to take some chances," he said.

"We have to find a way to move the ball and stop them. We have to play the best we have all season and make a couple of breaks happen."

San Francisco's Steve Young was the NFL's top-rated passer, completing 324 of 461 passes for 3,969 yards and 35 touchdowns while being picked off only 10 times.

NFL career touchdown leader Jerry Rice is his favourite target, with Ricky Watten handling the rushing chores for the 49ers (13-3).

"You have to get ready for an all-out war," Pittsburgh linebacker Greg Lloyd said.

Young said. "It really is the ultimate."

Miami could become the first club to play the Super Bowl on their home field with

two more triumphs. The Dolphins must first defeat San Diego, which started the season 6-0 before slumping home 5-5 the rest of the way.

"They present a lot of problems because they play a lot of zone defence and play well as a team," Miami receiver Irving Fryar said. "We have to run tight pass patterns and cut down on the mistakes we have had."

Carroll, a former defensive

coordinator, was in his first

campaign after replacing

Bruce Coslet. The Jets ended

the season with a five-game

losing streak, driving from

playoff contention and sealing Carroll's fate.

Kotite was fired by Phi-

ladelphia after a seven-game

losing streak tumbled the

Eagles out of the playoffs.

New England's owner Jeff Lurie wanted to ditch Kotite after taking charge.

Kotite's likely replacement

is Dick Vermeil, who guided

Philadelphia from 1976-1982.

He led the Eagles to the 1980

Super Bowl and went 57-51

before quitting, saying he was

burned out on coaching.

Vermeil has been a televi-

sion commentator for the

past 12 years, but is being

lured back by a 10 million-

dollar deal to be coach and

general manager for five

years.

Another ex-coach working

as a television commentator,

Jimmy Johnson, decided to

stay on the sidelines for

another year. Johnson's re-

placement in Dallas, Barry

Switzer, had his contract ro-

lled over, extending his cur-

rent deal through the 1999

season.

Some coaches kept jobs

despite poor showings.

Tampa Bay officials said

Thursday they will retain Saw

Wyche despite a 16-32 record

over his three seasons. A 6-10

campaign was the 12th

straight with double-digit los-

ers.

Houston suffered through

an NFL-worst 2-14 season

and fired Jack Pardee mid-

way through the season. His

replacement, Jeff Fisher, will

remain in charge for next

season, the Oilers announced

Thursday.

Also keeping his post is

Detroit's Wayne Fontes, who

received a two-year contract

extension Friday despite the

Lions' first-round playoff

ouster.

University of Miami coach

Dennis Erickson will be in-

terviewed for vacant jobs in

Denver and Seattle. Seattle

dumped Tom Flores and De-

nya dropped Wade Phillips

after their final games.

Two teams still in the play-

offs are likely to lose assis-

tants, San Francisco offensive

coordinator Mike Shanahan

is likely to get whichever job

Erickson does not take. Pitts-

burgh defensive coordinator

Don Capers will join the expan-

sion Carolina Panthers.

Coaching chaos hits NFL losers

National Football League teams out of Super Bowl contention continued a coaching shuffle Thursday, with one new hiring and some coaches getting new deals.

The New York Jets named Rich Kotite their new coach, replacing Peter Carroll after the Jets went 6-10.

Carroll, a former defensive coordinator, was in his first campaign after replacing Bruce Coslet. The Jets ended the season with a five-game losing streak, driving from play-off contention and sealing Carroll's fate.

Houston suffered through an NFL-worst 2-14 season and fired Jack Pardee midway through the season. His replacement, Jeff Fisher, will remain in charge for next season.

Also keeping his post is Detroit's Wayne Fontes, who received a two-year contract extension Friday despite the Lions' first-round playoff ouster.

Al Arabi/Al Orthodoxi: Al Orthodoxi surprised Al Arabi with a strong start and accurate scoring which gave Al Orthodoxi the lead at 14/10 until the 20th minute of the first half. But Al Arabi was awakened by their opponent's unstoppable attacks which forced them to regroup and put more pressure on Al Orthodoxi's tight defence to end the first half 19/14.

In the second half, Al Arabi pressured Al Orthodoxi's defence who looked tired and gave Al Arabi more chances to score and end the match 40/32.

After this win, Al Arabi tied Al Ahli in overall points and will play for the championship. The Jordan Handball Federation (JHF) has not yet decided when the match will be held.

In another match, Al Hussein tied with Al Salt 37/37 as Al Salt faced a lot of pressure from Al Hussein's Maher Abu Lail who was the star of the match. He scored most to end the first half 22/16.

In the second half Al Salt strengthened the defence

area and worked hard on building effective attacks to reach a tie in the final second of the second half.

Al Hussein thus came fourth with 10 points and Al Salt finished with 13 points.

Meanwhile Amman finished in fifth place with 8 points after Al Yarmouk Shouneh did not show up for the match although Al Yarmouk's coach Moham-

mad Othman said that he

Jordan Handball Championship Ahli, Arabi, to play for title

By Rousan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Kingdom's Handball Championship ended Thursday with a striking win for Al Arabi 40/32 against Al Orthodoxi at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

Al Arabi and tieholders Al Ahli are now tied with 22 points and will face-off in a deciding match for the

title.

Al Arabi/Al Orthodoxi: Al Orthodoxi surprised Al Arabi with a strong start and accurate scoring which gave Al Orthodoxi the lead at 14/10 until the 20th minute of the first half. But Al Arabi was awakened by their opponent's unstoppable attacks which forced them to regroup and put more pressure on Al Orthodoxi's tight defence to end the first half 19/14.

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mad Othman said that he

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Alhi *	12	11	—	1	420	276	22
Arabi *	12	11	—	1	384	315	22
Salt	12	6	1	5	360	361	13
Hussein	12	4	2	6	336	351	10
Amman	12	4	—	8	262	332	8
Y. Shonneh	12	3	1	8	324	364	7
Orthodoxi	12	1	—	11	324	413	2

* Ahli-Arabi will play a title-deciding match.

JORDAN TIMES 667171

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION REBIDDING OF IFB NO. 6/94 SUPPLY OF TELEPHONE CABLES

The "Special Tender Committee" for the National Telecommunications Programme announces rebidding of IFB No. 6/94 for the supply of the following types of cables to TCC Warehouse in Amman:

- a) Duct cables
- b) Direct buried cables
- c) Aerial cables
- d) Tip cables

The cost of these cables shall be financed by a loan received from the Japan Export Import Bank (JEXIM BANK).

Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1995 1

China in new drugs scandal

BELING (AFP) — Two Chinese women weightlifters, who both won titles at last November's world championships, have failed dope tests, a Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) official announced Friday.

Li Dan won the 83kg category and Wang Sheng the 54kg at the championships held in Istanbul. Li set a world record with 107.5 kg in the snatch section, adding two kilos to her mark set by compatriot Li Yajuan.

He Huixian, deputy secretary general of the COC, told AFP by telephone: "I have just been informed by the Chinese Weightlifting Association that Li Dan and Wang Sheng have been tested positive in Turkey and we will punish them according to the current regulations."

"I greatly regret this new affair, which demonstrates the existence of a number of problems," he added. "We must increase doping controls. We introduced a new series of regulations at the start of the year, which must be applied. Our position on fighting

drugs is a firm one and we will continue to cooperate in this area with international organisations."

The new doping scandal comes in the wake of 11 Chinese athletes — including seven swimmers — testing positive at the Asian Games in Hiroshima last October.

China's women's weightlifting team completely dominated the Istanbul championships — winning 18 of the 27 gold medals on offer. Second placed Colombia managed only three.

The Chinese athletes busted in Hiroshima all tested positive for dihydrotestosterone (DHT), which masks the presence of the male hormone testosterone.

Chinese officials denied a systematic drug programme in swimming but Yoshiro Kuroda, head of the Olympic Council of Asia's medical commission, has said that to use high-tech drugs, swimmers and coaches would have needed formidable research and development back-up.

Mansell pledges to carry on racing

BIRMINGHAM (R) — Nigel Mansell told thousands of his British fans Friday he intended to continue racing in Formula One and had no intention of retiring.

Speaking at the opening ceremony at the Autosport Show, the British driver said he drew strength from his army of supporters and would continue racing as long as he retained their support.

Former world champion Mansell, 41, has been linked with the vacant seat at McLaren since being passed over for the Williams drive earlier this week.

Williams signed fellow Briton David Coulthard, 23, to partner Damon Hill.

Mansell, talking on stage



Nigel Mansell

Olajuwon's 33 points leads Rockets over Mavericks

HOUSTON (R) — Hakeem Olajuwon had 33 points and Vernon Maxwell added 16 points to lead the Houston Rockets to a 108-99 win over the Dallas Mavericks and a sweep of a home-and-home series Thursday.

The Rockets extended their winning streak to six games.

Mario Elie came off the bench to score 15 points and Carl Herrera and Kenny Smith each added 12 points for Houston.

"This was a collective effort," Olajuwon said. "We're winning games we're supposed to win. We've gotten back to basics and complementing each other."

Jim Jackson had 26 points and Roy Tarpley chipped in with 19 points and 13 rebounds for the Mavericks, who have lost six of their last seven games.

In Los Angeles, Loy Vanght made a key steal and sank a 20-footer with eight seconds left, lifting the Los Angeles Clippers to a 95-93 victory over the slumping Philadelphia 76ers.

With the score tied 91-91, Vanght stole the ball from Willie Burton and made his shot over Shawn Bradley to give the Clippers the lead.

Philadelphia's Dana Barros, who scored 26 points, lost his dribble to Gary Grant, who made two foul shots with 1.4 seconds for a

95-91 advantage.

In Miami, Glen Rice scored 24 points and Kevin Gamble had 12 of his 14 in the second quarter as the Miami Heat raced to a 114-91 victory over the struggling Minnesota Timberwolves.

Billy Owens registered his first career triple-double with 19 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for Miami, which defeated Minnesota 125-113.

Isaiah Rider scored 23 points and Christian Laettner added 19 for the Timberwolves.

In Utah, David Robinson scored 25 points and Sean Elliott added 20 as the San Antonio Spurs held off the Utah Jazz 104-103, for their 10th victory in 11 games.

Robinson and Elliott each made key free throws in the final two minutes as the Spurs, who entered the final quarter with an 84-75 lead, managed just two field goals in the period.

Glenn Robinson scored 19 points and Vin Baker had 18 points and 16 rebounds for the Bucks, who snapped a five-game road losing streak to Golden State.

Tim Hardaway had 26 points and 13 assists and Tom Gugliotta scored 21 for the Warriors, who have lost 14 of their last 16 games.

Further to the announcement published in the local news papers and NFA, the new date set for bid submission and opening for the hereinafter listed bids is not later than 1330 hours, Jordan local time, on Saturday 28 January, 1995 instead of not later than 1330 hours, Jordan local time, on Tuesday 10 January, 1995. Other terms and conditions of the first announcement shall remain as they were.

RESULTS:

Miami	114	Minnesota	91
San Antonio	104	Utah	103
Houston	108	Dallas	99
Milwaukee	111	Golden State	103
LA Clippers	95	Philadelphia	93
Sacramento	94	Detroit	88

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE
WATER AUTHORITY
OF JORDAN
EXTENDING THE SUBMISSION
AND
OPENING DATE

Date: 06/01/1995
Loan No.: KIW/L&G

Further to the announcement published in the local news papers and NFA, the new date set for bid submission and opening for the hereinafter listed bids is not later than 1330 hours, Jordan local time, on Saturday 28 January, 1995 instead of not later than 1330 hours, Jordan local time, on Tuesday 10 January, 1995. Other terms and conditions of the first announcement shall remain as they were.

Contract No.	Material to be Supplied
83/94/WM/L	1/2" Water Meters
84/94/HSP/L	Horizontal and Submersible Pumps
85/94/HGV/L	Dump Trucks, Flat Beds, Cranes and Water Tankers
86/94/BPL/L	Plumbing Tools, Bearings and Spare Parts
87/94/SM/G	Source Water Meters
88/94/VLV/G	Valves
89/94/SP/G	Submersible Pumps
90/94/4WD/G	Off-Roads 4WD Vehicles
91/94/AW/G	Air Compressors and Welding Machines
92/94/WEL/G	Well Control Tools and Equipment

Eng. Kousai Quteishat
Secretary General
Water Authority

Jilin bids for 2006 Winter Games

BEIJING (R) — After the bitter disappointment of Beijing's failed bid for the 2000 Olympics, China's northeastern Jilin province hopes to win the right to hold the 2006 Winter Olympics, the people's daily said Friday.

Changchun, capital of Jilin, is likely to apply to hold the 2006 Winter Games in the wake of 11 Chinese athletes — including seven swimmers — testing positive at the Asian Games in Hiroshima last October.

China's women's weightlifting team completely dominated the Istanbul championships — winning 18 of the 27 gold medals on offer. Second placed Colombia managed only three.

The Chinese athletes busted in Hiroshima all tested positive for dihydrotestosterone (DHT), which masks the presence of the male hormone testosterone.

Chinese officials denied a systematic drug programme in swimming but Yoshiro Kuroda, head of the Olympic Council of Asia's medical commission, has said that to use high-tech drugs, swimmers and coaches would have needed formidable research and development back-up.

"I greatly regret this new affair, which demonstrates the existence of a number of problems," he added. "We must increase doping controls. We introduced a new series of regulations at the start of the year, which must be applied. Our position on fighting

Germany set for 2nd win in Hopman Cup

PERTH (AFP) — Germany are on target to becoming the first nation to engrave their name on the Hopman Cup twice after waltzing to victory over France in the second semi-final of the indoor tennis tournament Friday.

World number three Boris Becker and Anke Huber, ranked 12th, overpowered France's Jean-Philippe Fleurian and Julie Halard 6-2, 6-1 in an engrossing showdown Saturday with Ukraine, the big surprise of the mixed teams' competition.

Becker echoed the feelings of the full house of more than 8,000 when she said: "I thought it would be tougher. I believe it was because I didn't give her a chance to attack me. I am sure it will be very tough in the final."

In the men's singles, Fleurian began in dynamic style, breaking Becker's service in the opening game, holding service in the second and leading 4-0 in the third.

However, in champion fashion, Becker rallied to take the third game, broke back in the 10th and clinch the set in the tie-breaker.

Fleurian fought valiantly in the second set, but Becker always had his measure.

In the tie-breaker, Becker was in withering touch.

Woodforde ends Kafelnikov's run



Hopes for an all-Australian final ended when fifth seed Patrick Rafter lost 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) to Krajicek.

Krajicek will have to beat Boetsch to reach the final. Boetsch had a straight sets win over a giant-killing German Hendrik Dreckmann, 6-3, 6-4.

Boetsch, who spent a short time in the top 20 last year, but is now ranked 53, said he was happy with his form but fearful of playing Krajicek, who has been one of the form players of the tournament.

"It's tough because he puts pressure on your serve because he can fire three or four aces at you," Boetsch said.

Dreckmann reached the last eight after wins over second seed Wayne Ferreira and compatriot Carl-Uwe Steeb.

Tomba keeps on winning

KRANJSKA GORA, Slovenia (AFP) — Triple Olympic skiing champion Alberto Tomba of Italy picked up where he left off in 1994-winning.

The 28-year-old, having his best ever World Cup season, easily won the first giant slalom of 1995 here Friday in 2mins. 12.01 secs.

Mitja Kunc of Slovenia and Harald Strand-Nilsen of Norway tied for second, nearly a second behind.

Tomba's victory was his sixth of the season and the 39th of his explosive career.

Giorgio d'Urbo, Tomba's trainer, said he has never seen the Italian in better shape.

"Alberto has only one opponent — Tomba. The only person who can beat him is himself," said d'Urbo.

Tomba's win has put him ever further ahead in the overall World Cup standings. He leads his nearest rival, Switzerland's Michael Von Gruenigen, by over 300 points.

But the Italian refuses to talk about taking the title.

"It is still far too soon. Perhaps we can talk about it in February," said Tomba.

"I'm just delighted that I have been able to show the same form I showed last year," he added.

The 20-year-old Huber destroyed Halard with clinical efficiency, winning 6-2, 6-1 in an hour.

"This probably ranks as one of the best wins in my

year's crown to champions Badalona by a single basket, now top Group B and are one of the favourites to reach April's final four in Spain. In Pesaro:

Group A

Pesaro (Italy) 82 Paok

Salonika (Greece) 70 PAOK

Leading scorers:

Olympiakos — Eddie Johnson 27, Franko Nakic 15, Alexander Volkov 14

Barcelona — Ferran Martinez 22, Darryl Middleton 22, Federico Pieri 16, Walter Magnifico 13

PAOK Salonika — Zoran Savic 21, Kinis 17, Achilleas

Mamatziolas 12
In Athens:
Group B

Olympiakos (Greece) 99
Barcelona (Spain) 78 (half-time 43-37)

Leading scorers:

Olympiakos — Eddie Johnson 27, Franko Nakic 15, Alexander Volkov 14

Barcelona — Ferran Martinez 22, Darryl Middleton 11, Jose Antonio Montero 10

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Settler killed in W. Bank as Palestinian protests spread

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (Agencies) — Palestinian assailants ambushed a car near a Jewish settlement in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on Friday killing a woman settler and wounding a man, the Israeli army said.

Two girls in the car were unburt in the attack at Halalim settlement, 12 kilometres northwest of Ramallah.

Bloodstains could be seen inside and outside the car. Israeli troops appeared nervous and were closely checking cars at hastily set-up roadblocks. Army and emergency first-aid forces were called and soldiers scoured the area for attackers.

Jewish settlers scuffled with a Worldwide Television News (WTN) camera crew, breaking their camera. A WTN producer vehemently denied settlers' statements that the crew had interfered with emergency medical treatment of the victims.

Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) correspondent Maher Shalabi said settlers stole a television camera worth some \$40,000 that had been set on the ground while soldiers checked his crew before allowing it to approach the scene.

The shooting capped a week of violence that has further strained the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal.

already tainted by bloodshed and delays in implementing Palestinian elections and Israeli troop redeployment.

Israeli forces have shot dead seven Palestinians in the West Bank this week in three separate incidents in which the army said its forces were fired on first by guerrillas.

In the Gaza Strip, in the bloodiest such encounter since self-rule, Israeli soldiers shot dead three Palestinian policemen in unclear circumstances. Israel says its forces were fired on first. Palestinians deny it.

A young Palestinian led a march to the hill where work started three days before, shouting slogans against settlements through a megaphone.

Several settlers squared up against the demonstrators to prevent them spilling into the building site where work had stopped to observe the Jewish weekly day of rest.

Al Birsh mayor Abdil Jawaad Saleh said: "We will stay loyal to our land because it is a fight for life. This injustice has to end."

"We are going to lie down in front of the bulldozers and fight until the last drop of our blood," said 70-year-old demonstrator Ahmad Darwish.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Palestinians took part in three separate rallies Friday on the West Bank as protests over Israel's settlement programme spread across the territory.

Near Tulkarm to the northwest of the West Bank, armed Jewish settlers and Israeli soldiers stopped several hundred villagers and supporters from breaking into and alotted to a settlement.

At Al Khader, south of

Bethlehem, where the crisis over settlements erupted last week, Palestinians organised a march after Friday prayers.

The army intervened to stop them breaking into the building site of new homes at the neighbouring Ephrat settlement.

And at Al Birsh, north of Jerusalem, 200 Palestinians protested against Israel's seizure of 170 hectares of land to build a road linking the settlements of Psagot to Ofra close to Ramallah.

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Palestinian youths clash with an Israeli military police unit on Friday after the moon prayer as they were prevented from holding a demonstration in the village of Al Khader

against the widening of the settlement of Ephrat (AFP photo)

Rabin faces public crisis of confidence amid swing to right

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was Friday shaken by a mid-term crisis of confidence in his Labour government as polls showed a sharp swing to the right-wing opposition hostile to the Middle East peace process.

Mr. Rabin, who brought the Labour Party to victory for the first time in 15 years in 1992, was Friday faced with the possibility of a heavy defeat in the 1996 general elections.

A series of opinion polls showed Labour and Mr. Rabin's popularity at an all-time low since the 1992 elections.

"It's time to end the anarchy reigning in our party if we don't want to lose the elections. We are going to have to take some difficult steps," he told the radio, reacting to the polls which showed Labour would suffer heavy losses at the hands of the opposition.

On Sunday the Israeli premier called a meeting of a parliamentary group to study ways of overcoming the crisis which could result in a cabinet reshuffle.

"Rabin is the depressed leader of a depressed people, which have a tendency to get the blues and who will remember Labour with nostalgia when the right has returned to power," the daily *Yediot Acharonot* said.

Paradoxically although support for Labour and Rabin has been falling steadily

published in the daily *Davar* said.

Mr. Rabin's popularity has also fallen in the polls. On Friday he trailed his rival Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu by two points as estimates showed he would only win 23 per cent of the vote, according to a poll in the daily *Maariv*.

Just two months ago he was put seven points ahead of Mr. Netanyahu at 29 per cent of the vote.

In the November 1996 elections voters will directly elect their prime minister for the first time. Previously he has been appointed by parliament.

These polls are more an indication of the electorate's disappointment, than of political support for the right-wing whose return to power would spell a total blockage of the peace process," Mr. Rabin added.

Mr. Rabin has already had to do some heavy political bargaining to win support for his 44-seat government in the 120-seat Knesset or parliament.

But a poll by the Dafach institute showed that if elections were held today, Labour would lose 20 per cent of its seats to its main rival Likud.

The right wing, which is opposed to the slightest Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the autonomy deals painstakingly hammered out between Mr. Rabin's government and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), would hold the next majority, the poll

showed.

In London, a British Foreign Office spokesman faulted France, which has just taken over the presidency of the European Union (EU), for failing to coordinate with its EU partners.

"No other member state has re-established in Baghdad in this way," he said. "We remain very suspicious of the Iraqi regime's intentions in the wake of the events last October. It is not the moment to relax pressure on Iraq to comply fully with U.N. requirements."

France was one of Iraq's major arms suppliers and trading partners during the 1980s and is still owed an estimated several billion dollars by Baghdad.

It advocates a gradual easing of the U.N. oil embargo to reward Iraq for recognising Kuwait's borders and complying with disarmament resolutions.

Mr. Juppe was cagey about prospects of a move to ease sanctions when the Security Council reviews the issue later this month.

He endorsed Mr. Aziz's call for a "legalistic implementation" of the resolutions and said France wanted to break the deadlock.

"Some progress has been made over the past months, more remains to be done,"

Mr. Juppe, who previously met Mr. Aziz in New York four months ago, told reporters

bute to those who fought to free Iraq from colonialism.

And he hailed those who had taken part in the "glorious" fights such as "the mother of all battles" against the U.S.-led coalition which drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in the January-February 1991 Gulf war.

The army was "the people's staunch shield... preparing itself to face any evil," the Iraqi president said.

He warned that all the technological might and superiority in the world would not win when "the people are determined to fight and all the food they have does not exceed that of a simple fighter."

Despite the Gulf war, the U.S.-led coalition had "failed to subdue the will of Iraq," President Saddam said.

Mr. Juppe said his 80-minute meeting with President Saddam's longtime right-hand man covered the situation in Iraq and Baghdad's implementation of U.N. resolutions arising from its ill-fated 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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Germany to keep Algeria embassy open

BONN (Agencies) — Germany will keep its embassy in Algeria open despite an apparent threat by guerrillas to kill foreigners unless Western missions in Algiers were closed by Saturday, the foreign ministry said on Friday.

A ministry spokesman also said government security experts from European Union (EU) states, the United States and Canada were to meet later on Friday in Paris to discuss ways to enhance safety for their diplomats in Algeria.

Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel decided today that the German embassy in Algiers will continue its work for the time being," spokesman Martin Erdmann told reporters.

The announcement made a ministry spokesman also said government security experts from European Union (EU) states, the United States and Canada were to meet later on Friday in Paris to discuss ways to enhance safety for their diplomats in Algeria.

Zine Eddine Aliou Salah of the French-language daily *Liberate* was killed in an attack thought to have been carried out by Islamic radicals near his house in the Khazroum neighbourhood of Algiers, his newspaper said.

Abdul Rahman Meziane Cherif also told Reuters in Tunis the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) would not be allowed to run in presidential elections expected in the next 12 months.

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Salah, 35, a married father of two, was a well-known investigative journalist here whose latest stories covered

the hijacking of an Air France jetliner in Algeria and its storming in France.

The Islamic Salvation Army vowed to put him "even in Mecca" in a recent issue of its weekly newspaper, *Al Fath Al Mouine*.

Algeria's interior minister said on Friday security forces were gaining on the war against Islamic guerrillas and would crush them this year.

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The FIS was poised to win an election when the army-backed authorities stepped in and cancelled it January 1992. Algeria was plunged into violence in which at least 10,000 guerrillas, civilians and members of the security forces have been killed, according to government figures.

Foreign sources put the toll as high as 30,000 and say the country is in a state of civil war.

Mr. Meziane Cherif said the guerrillas of the Armed Islamic Group and the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) benefited at first from slackness and lack of preparation by the military.

Now "they are running away from our security forces which have adapted themselves to the new situation," he said.

In Rome, an influential Catholic peace group said on Friday that leaders of Algeria's opposition, including the FIS, had arrived in Rome for talks on their country's crisis.

The Sant'Egidio Community, which hosted Algerian opposition leaders for meetings in November, said in a statement that new talks were needed after an increase in violence, including the hijacking of the French airliner and the killings of four Roman Catholic priests.

market this year, they said.

According to Dr. Toucan, the sum total of these developments led to declined capital in the secondary market and hence the drop in turnover, said Dr. Toucan.

When fresh stock of an existing company enters the market, prices are also adjusted to accommodate them and this led to the decline in prices as indicated by the General index, he said.

"The year 1994 was an exceptional year," Dr. Toucan told the Jordan Times in separate comments. "But I believe that the figures are quite healthy despite the decline."

Brokers said the uncertainty over the Middle East peace process, the roller-coaster course of the autonomy accord signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the ambiguity that surrounded the economic cooperation accord signed by Jordan and the PLO were also part of the reasons behind the decline.

The peace treaty signed by Jordan and Israel in October was too far into the year to make any dramatic changes in the market situation, the brokers said. However, the impact of the peace treaty is expected to reflect on the

market this year, they said.

According to Dr. Toucan, the market assumed a higher stability during 1994 and internal measures adopted by the management also led to a better organisational structure of market practices and rules.

Following are some of the highlights of the annual report of the AFM:

The industrial sector accounted for JD 209.18 million, or 42.3 per cent, of the annual turnover, followed by commercial banks with JD 184.79 million, or 37.7 per cent, the services sector with JD 91.24 million, or 18.4 per cent, and insurance stock with JD 7.84 million, or 1.6 per cent.

The sector indices closed at 157.8 points in the commercial banks sector (down 6.4 points, or 3.9 per cent), the insurance sector at 138.2 points (down 21.6 points, or 13.5 per cent), in the industrial sector at 128.1 points (down 26.1 points, or 16.9 per cent) and in the services sector at 131.4 points (down 12.3 points, or 8.5 per cent).

Total market value

(Continued on page 7)

COLUMN 8

Marilyn Monroe to appear on U.S. stamps

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Silver screen legend Marilyn Monroe will grace the U.S. Postal System's new stamp series commemorating Hollywood superstars. The final design will be unveiled Thursday at the Planet Hollywood Restaurant in New York, with Anna Strasberg, the director of the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute, and Postmaster General Marvin Runyan officiating. The stamp features the star's signature as well as an image of Monroe that the post office says captures "the explosive combination of talent and vulnerable beauty that continues to capture America and the world." Monroe, who is alleged to have had relationships with President John Kennedy and his brother Robert, committed suicide in 1962.

It may not be just another naked lady statue